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Reflections,
ESSAYS AND MEDITATIONS
 ON
LIFE AND RELIGION,
 WITH
A Collection of Proverbs
 IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER,
 AND
TWENTY-EIGHT LETTERS

written occasionally on several subjects, viz.

The absurd notions of the sect called Methodists.

The customs of foreign nations in regard to Harlots.

The lawless commerce of the Sexes.

The repentance of Prostitutes.

AND

The great humanity and beneficence of the

Magdalane Charity.

By Mr. Hanway.

IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL. II.

Go and sin no more.

L O N D O N M.DCC.LXI.

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Reflections
ON THE
ARTS AND MEDICATIONS

OF THE
HUMAN MIND AND SENSATIONS

IN CONNECTION WITH
THE SENSES

BY
J. H. W. LAMBERT, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES
THE FIRST PART

OF THE
HUMAN MIND

AND THE
ARTS AND MEDICATIONS

OF THE
HUMAN MIND



VOL. II

TWENTY-EIGHT
LETTERS

ON THE
MAGDALANE CHARITY,
THE
LAWLESS COMMERCE OF THE SEXES,
AND THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION,
WITH
SEVERAL RELIGIOUS MEDITATIONS.

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LETTERS

ON THE
MAGDALENE CHARITY,

THE
LAWLESS COMMERCE OF THE SEXES,



CHRISTIAN RELIGION

WITH
SEVERAL RELIGIOUS MEDITATIONS

VOL. II.

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- Page 304. line 20. for the father read *her father*.
 393. l. 19. for companion r. *companions*.
 410. l. 2. “ before awake.
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 425. l. 9. dele *is*.
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 460. l. 1. dele *man and the*.
 487. l. 19. for lows r. *low*.
 563. l. 11. for such r. *such powers at least*.
 580. l. 13. for intimidates r. *intimidate*.

THE
 CHARACTER
 OF
 MARY MAGDALANE.

LETTER I.

To A. B.

S I R,

I Received your very learned and* obliging letter, in which you have quoted many authorities, to prove that *Mary Magdalane* was not a *harlot*.—I must confess, I was once of the common opinion, that this lady had been guilty of incontinency, but I was soon after corrected. She was certainly a lady of high rank and condition, and distinguished for her *fortune* as well as *nobility*, her education may therefore be supposed superior to that of any of the women who were the followers of our *Saviour*; and though she might not exceed them in *piety*, her *contrition* for the errors of her life, and her *gratitude* for the *miraculous* cure of the most *deplorable disease*, with

* The letter, to which the above is an answer, was printed for J. Noon.

her liberality in administering to the wants of others, are clearly handed down to posterity, with the highest marks of applause. Thus it is easy to reconcile her being considered, by the *Romanists*, as the *patroness of penitents*, as she is by us, an *eminent* example of piety. In after-ages the world might easily confound great holiness with distinguished *penitence*, and the common *sins* and *infirmities* of her life might be blended with the imputation of *incontinency*; notwithstanding there are many *sinners*, in the female world, who are not *harlots*, nor guilty of *adultery* or *fornication*. And indeed, why this lady should be *supposed* to have violated the divine law in this instance, because there were others of the same name of *Mary*, or because *seven devils* had been cast out of her, is not to be reconciled upon any other principle than our inattention to *time* and *place*, and our ignorance of the nature of the disease: for it is reasonable to presume, that the disease itself was an impediment; and moreover, if it cannot be clearly traced out that she was a *harlot*, we ought to conclude she *was not one*. As to the vulgar notion, that a *female sinner* implies a *prostitute*, it proves nothing.

But I apprehend, Sir, you need not be alarmed on account of naming the house of penitents, the *Magdalene house*: you see that it affords occasion for *vindicating* the reputation of the *lady*, supposing her to have been innocent; and it may possibly *correct* the vulgar opinion, instead of *confirming* it. And whether she was a sinner in this way, or in any other, she stands so much the more on record, as an example of great *contrition* and *piety*,
not

not as a *harlot*. St. *Luke* having been a *physician*, as well as an *evangelist*, the hospital for *lunatics*, in this city, is dedicated to him ; but posterity will not therefore imagine that St. *Luke* was not in his *right mind*. But if the *penitent prostitutes* in *Prescot-street* should, on account of any erroneous opinion concerning *Mary Magdalane*, happily imitate the *gratitude* and *contrition* for which this excellent lady is renowned, if she was to revisit this *bad world*, she would be *pleased*, rather than *offended*, and, with the true spirit of holiness, smile with joy, at the mistake. But you say, we had better not dedicate this house to any *saint* : be pleased to take notice, that *we* have not canonized *Mary Magdalane*. — It is only plain *Magdalane House*.

As to your complaint, that the term *penitent prostitute* is too *harsh* ; though I find in myself no kind of inclination to *insult* the meanest creature upon earth, especially of the *female sex*, yet I must confess, that I think a public institution, calculated to promote so important an end as the *repentance of such sinners*, the first step necessary is to give the offender a right sense of her condition. This cannot be so easily done by calling guilt by a *soft* name, as by a *true* one : besides, the term *prostitute* is the politest, for the idea we mean to convey ; and she who is really *penitent* will not be the less so for being mentioned as such, not with any aggravation, but simply as a proper name : and granting, that several who take refuge in the house, have not been *common*, the nature of the institution will hardly admit of the distinction. Indeed several of the young

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women

women who have been received, their circumstances challenge more attention than the world is aware of; yet I hear of no complaints about the word *prostitute*.

Let us rather think of the *substance*, than of the *names* of things. I can with great pleasure assure you, that this charity, though it was long considered as a romantic scheme, is already productive of great good; and many a poor girl is now qualified as a good citizen and subject, who would have been the cause of great *mischief* to society; and from seeing nothing before her own eyes but guilt and *perdition*, is now happy in *innocence*, and the hopes of *heaven*.

It is easy to conceive, that even a *few months* retreat may be a means of reconciling many *parents* and *friends* to offenders, as well as teaching them the way to heaven. And when *no other* succor on earth can be expected, that which is afforded by the *promoters* of the *Magdalene Charity*, must stand in as *honorable* esteem, and as glorious to be *imitated*, as the character of the lady for which you are so piously jealous. I am, with great respect,

Sir,

Ost. 10. 1758.

Your most humble Servant.

The

The practice of other nations, with regard to houses for the reception of Penitent Prostitutes.

LETTER II.

To the Right Hon. ———

I Grant your *Lordship's* observation to be very just, that scarce a day passes but some choice spirit amongst us gives birth to a scheme for the *public good*: happy nation where men of such dispositions are found! When these schemes carry with them any probable proofs of their being really for the *public good*, it would be a national reproach not to countenance them. But we must not be surprized that many proposals made to the public, are so unfit to bear the *light*, that they die before the sun sets on them.

Such is not the case of the *Magdalene Charity*, nor is the *undertaking* so new as your *Lordship* seems to imagine. I have turned over some *volumes* on the subject, and made several *enquiries*, and I find the same thing has been adopted by almost every christian country in the world. It has been thought of very often, and very *seriously* by many of our fellow-subjects: but we are now more particularly indebted to Mr. R. *Dingley*; this gentleman mentioned it to me eight years ago, as an object

ject he had much at heart, and waited an opportunity to carry it into execution, and he has given the highest proof of zeal on this interesting occasion.

Observing how successful the *Marine Society* had been in providing for so many *vagabond boys* throughout the three kingdoms, it was natural for any man to turn his thoughts to *girls* of the same stamp; but this did not appear to me equally practicable. I once consulted our friend the *bishop of Worcester*, always benevolent and active in promoting the *public welfare*, but his lordship started many difficulties. We have now seen what zeal and *attention* can do, by the distressed young girls provided for at the *asylum*: this, I conceive to be an excellent model for a well-regulated house, for the female poor, in their state of *childhood*, so far as it goes. *Happy* those who can say, were it only in a single instance, “*I have saved a family from penury, infamy, and perdition, by a well-timed private charity* ;” that is the most essential trial of *this* kind of virtue; and those only who have experienced the joy, can tell how sincere the pleasure is, of lifting up those who are fallen, and such as are desirous to help themselves in an honest way of living; or preventing those from sinking into the depths of misery, on whom the hand of affliction has been heavy.

As to a *public* place, where all *young beggars*, as well as those advanced in life, might be received and employed, I know but of *one*: it is the *London workhouse*. If the *directors* of it would enlarge their bottom, extend their
ideas,

ideas, and solicit an effectual support ; it might answer all the purposes which the most humane can expect, or the most pious wish for and desire.

With respect to those who have already gone astray, (and many thousands will go in spite of all our attempts to the contrary) we may say of the *Magdalane Charity*, that *faith and good works have walked hand in hand*, with regard to both worlds. This object must, from the very nature of things, be of great benefit to society, if it is properly conducted ; and experience abundantly confirms this belief.

It is true, *my Lord*, that all nations have something peculiar to themselves : their *genius*, their *laws*, their *religion*, create a great difference in their *manners* and *customs* ; and hence it is obvious, that an establishment which is very consistent in one country, may be absurd in another. But human nature is the same ; the propensity to *sensual* gratifications differs very little, and therefore it is no wonder that there should be some points in which all nations agree. With regard to the duties of *humanity*, we see that the most barbarous people, whose notions of the *deity* are dark and perplexed, still think it their duty to preserve their *fellow-creatures*, unless there appear reasons for *destroying* any of them, and these reasons are generally founded in the first law of nature, *self-preservation*. In all *free and civilized states*, the first principle is, *save your neighbor, if he has not forfeited his life to the laws, and you save yourself*. But if we go further, we may say, *if we suffer those to perish, whom it is in our*

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power

power to preserve, it is next in order to the actual destroying of them: and it is beyond all doubt that many thousands, in the course of time, have perished, in consequence of the opinion, that it is impossible to reclaim a female prostitute; not considering that the degrees of sin in this article are almost as numerous as the sinners: and though they are all criminal, they are very far from being all irreclaimable. Mankind in general are guilty of many other offences against God, and the laws of their country, which seem as difficult to cure, as this of female prostitutes: and what should we say if it were proved, that to one female, there are a dozen male prostitutes, who never think at all of accounting for such sins.

The christian world is distinguished by the most extensive benevolence, at the same time that the religion of Christ enjoins a stricter purity, than is known under any other faith. The parabolical story of the good Samaritan, which stands upon such honorable record, leads us to the truest knowledge of the obligations to charity. The traveller was fallen among thieves: he was not questioned if his own indiscretion was the cause of it; he was grievously wounded, and in danger of perishing, therefore this good man, though a stranger, thought it his duty to relieve him. No difference in manners, faith, or country; no opinions in politics, influenced his conduct, it was enough that the traveller was a man, and in distress.

But, my Lord, when we consider what the practice of other christians is, in behalf of such prostitutes as are inclined to repent of their sins, though we think ourselves much

much *wiser* than other nations, we are many centuries behind several of them. Motives of *policy*, as well as a sense of *moral* and *religious* obligation, have erected many institutions of this kind, which have been supported by some of the greatest, and noblest minded persons of both sexes, in *Italy, France, Spain, the United Provinces*, and several other countries.

In *Holland* they have such an establishment, differing from the others, for it is not of the *monastic* kind, but there are some circumstances relating to the conduct of it, which by no means recommend it as a model to us. In *Amsterdam, Rotterdam*, and other cities, there are many houses of *labor*: the *Dutch* know well how to employ the *profligate* as well as the *poor*. One of these houses, is called the *Spinhuys*. Here the women work, and are closely watched. In a year or two, their faces, by the natural change of inhabitants in that country, are frequently forgotten as *prostitutes*; and when they have a mind to go out, if they have obtained a character for *sobriety* and *industry*, it is esteemed a recommendation. Once a year, at their *annual fair*, they walk in a kind of gallery, and appear as servants do at a statute-fair, in the different counties of *England*. Sailors just landed, and who have neither time nor inclination for very long courtship, often marry them, the *magistrates* giving their consent; and many persons, from *prostitutes*, have been rendered very good subjects: and

there are many instances of men, who have gloried in thus saving the unfortunate. In this house people are permitted to see the *women* for *money*, but it is under the eye of the master and overseer of the house. Here parents find out their daughters again, whereas with us, in this metropolis, the changing names, and places of abode, renders it almost impossible, and many a poor girl *dies in an hospital, or a prison*, at the very instant that her friends are in search of her, and willing to take her to their home.

This institution in *Amsterdam* has existed ever since 1596, when the house was built by the *Regency*. Many who were *beggars*, or lived in *stews*, were then put in here, and maintained at the expence of the city. The sense of the inscription over the door is, *Do not fear : I revenge myself not of the EVIL, but I compel them to do good. My hand is severe, but my heart is friendly.*

There is also the *Verbeetering huys* or Reformatory : in this building are shut up *different kinds of people*, in different apartments ; some to be punished *corporally* for their offences ; some only simply set to work for their *debaucheries*. In all these places the *Bible* is read to them whilst they are at work ; they also *sing psalms* and *spiritual songs*, and other means are used to estrange them from *vice*, and encourage them in *virtue*. Here are other private apartments, where young women, and young men also, who are viciously inclined, are occasionally shut up, separately, at the request of their parents, till
such

such time as they shew tokens of repentance. I mention these particulars, not so much as a means proper for us in this *free country*, to chastise the *turbulent and vicious*, as a practice adopted by a people, famed for *good discipline*, and *once renowned in arms*.

There is an order of *penitents* at *Marseilles*, established so long since as the year 1272, with a view to engage women, who had prostituted their persons, to return to virtue. In 1452 there was a foundation of the same kind erected at *Metz*. At *Naples* there was an order established in 1314 (or as some writers mention, in 1324) for harlots, under the name of *Magdalanes*. — About the *fifteenth* century, there was another establishment of the same kind, commenced at *Paris*, for those unhappy women who, languishing under the *crime of prostitution*, desired to devote themselves to heaven, and atone for their misdeeds. Among others I find this remarkable circumstance, that none were to be received after *thirty-five* years of age. This order was branched out, and we see, soon after, there were *Magdalanes*, and *Magdelanettes*, at *Rouen* and *Bordeaux*, being convents to receive these kind of sinners, and *four* nuns, of one of the first orders at *Paris*, were employed to regulate the conduct of these penitents. This proved a laborious task, and these nuns were relieved from time to time. In these places it was prohibited, under pain of excommunication, to receive any but real harlots. Besides these there are several other institutions in *France* of the same kind.

Another order was founded at *Seville*, in 1550, for such women as had followed a licentious life, and, being touched with remorse, were become penitents. In *New Spain* they have a discipline of the same nature. The bishop of the diocese makes his circuit annually: if he finds any woman of public ill-fame, he banishes her to some distance, in hopes of reclaiming her. If she persists, the next year he sends her to some place more remote. If she still pursues her evil course of life, the *third* year she is shut up in a *penitential house*; where, according to the nature of her offences, if she will *eat*, she must *work*. She is here confined for a year or longer time, unless she finds a husband, which these kind of women often do, men who are inclined to perform an extraordinary penance for some capital offence against God, hoping to make atonement by such marriages.

In *Rome*, a convent of this sort was established so long since as 626, dedicated to *Mary Magdalane*, who is considered as the patroness of *penitents*. Pope *Leo X.* afterwards confirmed the same. *Clement VIII.* ordered, that all the effects of public or private harlots, who died intestate, should devolve to this monastery; or, if they made a *will*, it should be null, unless they bequeathed a *fifth part* of their goods, to this institution. — There are charities of this kind in almost every city in *Italy*. In some of these *retreats* there are of *three* distinctions; one of *St. Magdalane*, who make *vows*; one of *St. Martha*, who

who are not admitted to make *vows*; and one of St. *Lazarus*, who are detained by force.

Thus we see what the practice of *christians* has long been in *popish* countries. Thank heaven we know, that the *parade* of *papal* vanity is the produce of *ignorance* and *superstition*: but humanity and the *tendernefs* which the wise and benignant author of nature has implanted in the human breast, is common to all. Nor does this *passion*, for so we may justly call *compassion*, predominate least in those, whose *imagination*s are the most *chastised*, or in whom the deceptions of *fancy* are best understood: on the contrary, we find that the most vicious, or those whose *passions*, in general, are the *least tamed*, have also the *least sense* of the *miserics* their vices create. This is clearly evinced by the conduct of too many *men*, with regard to *women*, in the instance of *illegal commerce*. I find that *LADIES* of *virtue*, *fortune* and *distinction* have had the greatest share in these establishments abroad; whereas, *with us*, there seems to be *one common spirit of benignity in both sexes*.

It is one of the absurd tenets of the *Romish* church, to engage people to make *vows*, and to shut them *entirely* from the world, whether their *hearts* subscribe to such seclusion or not; but this is not the case in all instances, even with that church, as appears from what I have mentioned above; and it cannot be the less agreeable to the purity of *genuine christianity*, nor the less consistent with the *wisest policy*, to afford unhappy women a *temporary voluntary retreat*, where *piety* may be supported by *labor*, and where the *united force of both* will qualify them effectually for

both worlds. With us no *incense* will be offered, but the *pure flames* of devotion; nor will *any vows* be required: it may be hoped, indeed, the women will be inspired with a *resolution* to die, rather than abandon *virtue*, to which they profess themselves *votaries*.

Your lordship will easily conceive, that many will learn the principles of the *christian religion*, who knew nothing of them *before*, and consequently when they return into the world, they will have additional motives to *shun temptation*, as well as *experience* to avoid it, however disguised under *specious* appearances. By this means they may do *honor* to human nature, instead of *disgracing* it: they may learn how to provide for their *lives*; and when *death* comes, look forward with *joyful hopes* of the *happiness* beyond the grave.

It is obvious what the common sense of mankind has been, in regard to the *means of repentance* afforded for this kind of violation of the *christian law*. Nor must we suppose these nations do not know what they are about: they invite those to repentance, who are inclined to *repent*, and those that are not inclined, they lay under *restrictions*, that as little *mischief* as possible may be done by them. Upon this principle, in some of those very countries where such indulgence is shewn, they have established a *police* in relation to *harlots*. It has been a received notion amongst us, that in *Rome*, and several other places, these women are *licensed*, or tolerated; and it is true, they are under *regulations*, as a part of the *police* but not in the *manner* as is generally apprehended.

When

When a woman is detected, or known to live in this state of licentiousness, she is summoned before a *magistrate*, who declares the reason of it in these terms: *You are impeached of being guilty of prostitution, and of making a trade of it. If you are inclined to repent, you may be received into the house of penitents, * where you will be properly employed, and taken good care of. If you will not accept of this offer, and are detected again, you must enter your name at the public register, as a prostitute, and be subject to the following regulations, for the breach of which you will be severely chastised.*

1st. *You shall not appear on any account, except in a certain district †.*

2dly. *You shall not refuse any man who may ask you, except on sundays or holidays; it must not be before such an hour, nor after such an hour ‡.*

3dly. *If you live on the ground floor, you are to take but one shilling; on the first floor one shilling and sixpence; and on the second you may take two shillings ||.*

4thly. *You are to receive but one man at a time to your apartment, under severe penalties, which will be exacted of you, upon information.*

5thly. *You are not entitled to receive any benefit, from any hospital or parish.*

6thly. *You have no right to appeal to justice for any insult, or debt, acts of cruelty excepted.*

7thly.

* *Le Convertite.* † Places mentioned. ‡ Hours mentioned.
 || About this value: the *Italian* houses differ from ours, as to the estimation of different floors.

7thly. *Your oath shall not be valid, except in case of robbery or murder.*

8thly. *You are not entitled to any asylum hereafter, except to be received to hard labor.*

9thly. *You are to be subject to such future laws and regulations, as may be hereafter made for the incorrigible : and*

Lastly, You are not entitled to christian burial.

Some of these would be thought hard terms, even for a prostitute, in a free country ; though according to the terms of our creed, a person dying in a state of *premeditated professed prostitution*, seems to forfeit a title to *christian burial*. Can the *burial service* be read over such a body ? Our *dearly beloved sister departed in sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection*, may perchance be considered as *mockery*.

I do not venture to tell your *Lordship*, that the *Italians* adhere strictly to all these rules ; they are too partial to the vicious part of the sex ; and their discipline is so much relaxed, that *common prostitutes* are to be found in almost every part of the great cities in *Italy*, and the *Venetian territory* ; but what I have related appears to be the light in which their *civil and ecclesiastical laws*, and their *common sense of christianity*, have placed *common prostitutes*. I am, with sincere respect, &c.

The inefficacy of laws to prevent unlawful commerce.

LETTER III.

To the same.

I Am very sensible, *my Lord*, that some of the customs of the *Hollanders* are by no means consistent with the purity and simplicity of our plan. As to their showing the women in the *Spinbuys* in *Amsterdam*, either *for money* or *without*, it is a circumstance inconsistent with the nature of such an Institution as ours, in *London*. And as for using corporal punishments for those who are turbulent, it is as contrary to a voluntary confinement, as *compulsive* measures would be inconsistent with *real penitence*.

Though the countenancing of fornication may be esteemed a *political evil* in *Holland*, and the *Dutch* may give liberties to their *Speel huizen* or music houses, as so many rendezvouses of harlots, we exceed them in the appearance of common women in the open streets: and they are stricter in respect to *married men*, for these are subject to be severely *fined* by the *Lieutenant of the police*, if taken in such offences. The *Hollanders* seem to be much more phlegmatic than we are: if it is true, that they are much greater *sensualists* in this respect, the question may be asked, Is not this occasioned by the indulgence of their *music houses*? Whether it arises from this cause, or from there

there being so many seafaring men ; or from the common people being less susceptible of *fear* or *hope* of any thing that may happen *hereafter*, I know not. This, however, I must remark, that although the *Spaniards* were once their masters, they have forgotten a *Spanish* proverb ; “ *La muger compuesta, a su marido, quita de puerta agena.*” “ A clean well-dressed wife draws her husband from another woman’s door.” Harlots in all countries understand the secret of an elegant appearance. Though innocent in themselves, the *milliner* and the *mantua maker* often promote *incontinency* among a *certain class*, almost as much as the *cook* and the *vintner* ; and perhaps the carelessness of the *Dutch* wives, in regard to their persons, may be one cause of this kind of profligacy. Be this as it may, I could never comprehend how any *christian legislators* could interfere to give countenance to whoredom.

Adultery and *fornication* are subject to *penances* in the *Romish* church ; but the distinction she makes of *venial* and *mortal* sins, affords a greater latitude for such offences among the *papists*, than with us : for these very penances, which are to atone for sins, are, I believe, one cause of the frequent repetition of them : and I would venture a round sum upon *Portugal* against *Holland*, that the former goes farthest in the vice in question. The reason is plain : the first finds a *salvo* for the foul ; the last only connives at the gratification of the appetite, and leaves the party to make up his account with heaven. How men can reconcile the making a law to *permit*, under any
modi-

modifications, *that* which GOD has made a law to *forbid*, is what I have no conception of. All speculations with regard to *legal* permissions of this kind, seem to be a kind of *jeu d'esprit*, which is sometimes played off, in opposition to those sanguine *pietists*, who in the exuberancy of their zeal, flatter themselves into a belief, that the reign of the *saints* will be restored; and the sin of fornication become as rare, and esteemed as criminal as murder.

It has been often said, that we ought to confine *prostitutes* to particular streets in *London* and *Westminster*: this might still imply a *legal* permission, and be construed as countenancing of harlots in *such* streets. To attempt to hunt them out of the land, would be extravagant; but to drive them out of the most public streets may be esteemed as a necessary part of *police*. We see they are often hunted out, for a night or two, and then they take their *stands*, and their *walks* as usual.

With respect to the countenance of the music houses in *Holland*, how many *taverns*, *bagnios*, and other places have we, which though subject to be visited, and all evil practices chastised, yet in fact furnish as great a *choice* as the *music houses*, and they are but seldom interrupted. On the other hand, it has been well remarked, that "it requires some advance in wickedness, for a young man to go *publicly* to places where many eyes are upon him; whereas the most modest and best disposed youth may, in an unguarded moment, when flushed with liquor, or heated by conversation

or intemperance, be induced to sacrifice his *innocence, health, and peace of mind*, to the gratification of appetite where his blushes are spared, and he thinks himself unseen and secure from detection."

Which ever way we turn, we are surrounded with *difficulties* : and what shall we say, *my Lord*, to the conduct of our *magistrates*, or the efficacy of our *laws* to accomplish a reformation? it is but too obvious from experience, that all nations want *skill* to make, or *virtue* to execute any law, to answer the purpose effectually : and it is much easier to *talk* of such laws than to *frame* and *adapt* them to our *religion* and *constitution*. To remove the evil depends on *individuals* ; and *true religion*, and *true politics* will ever be in a tottering condition, unless the *virtue of private persons* comes in aid of their support. *That virtue*, so far as its influence extends, is demonstrated in the *present design* of the *Magdalene Charity* ; and, I hope, *divine Providence* will befriend it. The plan is so agreeable to the *humanity* of this nation in general, and the execution is attended with so many *interesting events*, it must strike the hearts of all kinds of people. I can assure your *Lordship*, that there is the strongest marks of *real contrition* in many of these women ; and as high proofs of *unfeigned joy*, on the part of their parents and friends, upon their being restored to them, as *new* creatures ; not by any wonder-working power, but as a moral effect, arising from a habit of industry. Many are also placed out into good
services,

services, and in the fairest way of being saved from perdition. In due time *your Lordship* shall know further how this charity operates: in the mean while be assured of my zeal, and of that of my *colleagues*, and I trust that Providence will befriend us.

I am, with great respect, &c.

A 2 It is one essential part of wisdom to bear with
 it is a duty to accommodate ourselves to the
 propositions of mankind, till we can find them contrary
 into the paths of truth: nor should we be at all dis-
 quised that a design of this nature has been so many years
 in agitation. Considering the perverseness of the women
 who generally take up the malicious trade of a slander, and
 make use of this dreadful accusation, we must not
 wonder in the opinion which is spread, with regard
 to their intentions. But the truth is, these women dis-
 tory from each other in temper and disposition, as much as
 any rank of mankind can be: and it is well known that all
 of the same rank are seldom of the same mind. The pro-
 posal to establish a house for penitents is very simple;
 the execution depends on the piety and good faith of those
 who contribute to it, and still more of those who execute
 it. I am persuaded your humanity will please to be open
 to those women who have lived as penitents to
 forsake their evil course of life.

The success of this paper will be that the true way will
 pointed to as well as the false, and many a poor soul
 being added to the list of the saved, instead of the lost.

Principles on which the Magdalene Charity is founded.

LETTER IV.

To W — O — Esq;

AS it is one essential part of *wisdom* to bear with *folly*, so it is a duty to accomodate ourselves to the prepossessions of mankind, till we can lead them gently into the paths of *truth*: nor should we be at all surprized that a design of this nature has been so many years in agitation. Considering the perverseness of the women, who generally take up the infamous *trade of a harlot*, and make *choice* of this dreadful occupation, we must not wonder at the opinion which often prevails, with regard to their *impenitence*. But the truth is, these women differ from each other in temper and disposition, as much as any rank of mankind can do: and it is well known that all of the *same trade* are seldom of the *same mind*. The proposal to establish a house for *penitents* is very simple; the *execution* depends on the *piety*, and *good sense* of those who *contribute* to it, and still more of those who *conduct* it. I am persuaded your humanity will plead for it, upon these *conditions*.

1. To induce women who have lived as *prostitutes* to forsake their evil course of life.

2.
* The reason of this page 282 is, that the *two volumes* were printed so far with design to be in *one*, but many *LETTERS*, &c. being added to the first design, the work was made into *two volumes*.

2. To open a retreat for them where they may pass their time in *comfort* and *safety*, under no other confinement than such as shall be necessary for their own preservation, and what *themselves* shall have *voluntarily* consented to, without any such *legal* power, as experience has taught to be no ways adequate to the evil.

3. To *employ* them in the most useful manner, both for *themselves* and the *community*.

4. To establish such *regulations* and *œconomy* as shall at once seclude them for any evil communication, and give them such habits as may recommend them to the *sober* part of mankind.

5. To treat them with such regard as shall convince them that nothing more is meant than their *own happiness*, and yet avoid showing any such *indulgence* as shall either tempt the evil-minded to *abuse* the charity, or disqualify any who are really penitent from procuring a maintenance by *virtuous industry*.

6. To dismiss them whenever it shall appear for their service, but to recommend to them to stay till they have acquired such habits as promise fair to secure them from the bad effects of *idleness*, and till they are qualified to get their bread *in the fear of God*.

7. To give them such a share of the produce of their industry, as may give them an entrance into the world with *decency* and *reputation*.

8. To conduct this charity in such a manner, that it shall be considered as a favor to be accepted : and consequently inconsistent with the notion of imprisonment,

and

and yet *desireable* only by the most *wretched* of mankind.

Experience teaches us that all this is practicable, and surely no charity can have more piety, or more dignity. I dare hope it will be well looked after. “ And “ if the price of a *good woman* is beyond gold : ” if the sincerest joys of life flow from the conduct of *virtuous women* ; and the acutest miseries from the *vicious* part of the sex, were it possible to drop the consideration of a future state, the converting *bad* women into *good* ones would be a work worthy the highest applause of *men*, as the conversion of sinners is a subject of joy to *angels*. Even the consciousness of such a *good intention* will assuredly advance their happiness who attempt it. This is a short detail of what is meant, and what no man who has a heart like yours can object to. I am *Yours, &c.*

Dec. 1758.

The

*The general state of human life a motive to befriend the
Magdalane Charity.*

LETTER V.

To the same.

I Have always found it dangerous to *refine*: we must seek for *motives* in every man's heart, which *he* only can fathom who made it: but in these cases there are many reasons which lie level to common observation; and though we may suppose that many are warmed with zeal and piety, I see nothing in it but what *sober sense* and *humanity* absolutely demand of us.

It is confessed that *hope* and *fear* are the great incentives to all human actions: and such as respect the hope of *heaven* and the fear of *hell* ought in all reason to be, not only the most free of all *worldly vanity*, but also to have the strongest influence, whenever any great occasion offers of doing a most essential good to mankind. What shall I do to be saved? — How shall I most effectually serve *my God, my country, and mankind*? This was not the question of a *hermit*, contented to be *passively* virtuous, but of one whose spirit engaged him in the active scenes of life: of one who had the happiness to behold the *Messiah* with his own eyes, and was anxious to give the highest proof of the most *sincere* obedience to him

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as his *Sovereign*, his *Lawgiver*, and his *Saviour*. The question points out the true distinction between the *busy wise man*; and the *busy fool*; between him who *employs* the talents GOD has intrusted him with, and him who *squanders* them away on *trifles*.

We know well that riches and honors are not always found in the paths of the *virtuous*, nor yet in those of the most understanding part of mankind, but he who is *rich in good works*, and full of the *hope of immortality*, ought to esteem himself *happy*: and whilst we make a *true estimate of life*, we shall clearly discover, that *virtue* and *understanding*, which in a religious sense mean the same thing, are so essential to us, that without them all other things are *really vain*.

Alas, my friend, how unwilling are we to learn even from our own observation! but we see in the persons of others, that our days are but "*as shadows that depart, or as a dream when one awaketh*:" We *believe* that the *soul is immortal*, yet we *doat* on this world as if there was *no other*: we are *convinced* that there is a state of *happiness*, and of *misery* after death; but how seldom do we *act* up to the *power* of such belief? This would be the greatest of all *wonders*, if we were not equally sensible of the *frailties* of human nature, and the *delusions* men often fall into. *Reason* and the laws of our own minds, as well as *faith* in the attributes of the invisible God, compel us to acquit him with regard to the *duties* he requires of us: and *weak* and *indigent* as we are, when we contemplate the wonderful frame of our *bodies*, and the more
amazing

amazing properties of the *soul*, we cannot avoid entertaining a *reverence* for *ourselves*, especially when we find that from our *weakness* arises our *strength*; that our very sensibility of infirmities puts us on our guard: absorbs the *pride* to which our depravity so much inclines us, and *humbles the soul*: from hence it is that we confess our *dependance*, and in the *deepest humiliation* prostrate ourselves, and *adore* the hand that made us!

Thus in spite of our *imperfections*, or the *consciousness* of our infirmities, we *march on*, and aspire at a much higher glory than *earthly* splendor, or the *applause of men*. Though so many of us *sweat* under a load of evils, yet we are still supported: a rational confidence in a *future state of happiness*, makes us truly *masters of the world*. And though reason and sense teach us to *value life*, wisdom instructs us to *consent to die*; and to a mind thus fortified, a *repugnance* to the will of heaven is worse than *death*.

The *true philosopher*, as well as the *true soldier*, will ever submit to *discipline* and follow his *leader*. He knows it to be at once his DUTY and his HONOR to *obey*. He feels the force of *truth*: he exults in the reflection that he is *acting right*; and whether he *triumphs* or is *led in chains*, he looks forward to the world unknown, still persuaded, that he *shall one day be happy*.

Such are the heights to which the *native greatness* of the soul conducts us. But, *alas, my friend*, we ought to consider that he who has been most exposed to danger, should most rejoice when the campaign of life is ended:

ended : and when nothing more remains than to look up to heaven *for mercy*, the reflection on having *fought* for others, and *sought* the means of their *happiness*, will give him the best assurance of *his own*, in those regions, *at the verge of which he stands !*

With respect to the wretched objects in question ; consider how easily men give way to the solicitations of their senses : pleasure with *delusive smiles* tempts us to desert our post. *Passion* or *appetite*, *fancy* or *opinion*, misrepresent things to us, and either flatter us into a belief of that which has no existence, or entice us to pursue those *fleeting joys* which lead to *pain* and *sorrow*. Is it any wonder then that many *overlook*, and many *despise* the law of life, and grasp at the *transient moment*, at the hazard of *eternity !*

If *life* is thus pregnant with evils, and if this is the general state of it, motives to *beneficence* draw with irresistible force, whenever there is such an occasion to exert them. You who understand human nature will most readily compassionate those who from their situation were *early exposed*, and themselves being *very weak*, or the temptation *very strong*, are now groaning in the miserable *bonds of vice* ; tormented with *anxious forebodings*, or sleeping with a false *security* on the very *verge of perdition !* We know that offences must come ; and we also know that woe is denounced against him by whom they come : but shall we not use the means which the mercies of heaven have put into our hands, to prevent the fatal consequences as much as possible ?

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To be persuaded that there *is hardly any evil without its remedy*, is the first step towards finding it; and so far as we can suppose an effort of this kind can be carried, I make no doubt but that we shall *succeed*. Yet this is not all: — as creatures of one common nature *we are bound* to take care of each other: and in what else does the *essence* of religion consist? It was for this end we were sent into the world: *Justice* and *mercy* in their full display, respecting men, are included in such charities. The SON OF GOD himself appeared on earth charged with a commission to save mankind; *upon condition of their repentance*; and there seems to be a *peculiar analogy* between the *duty* in general, and *this charity* in particular. It is beyond all dispute that we are not to confine our regards to the body, as the generality of charities do: we are interested in extending them to another being; and if the highest promises are made to him that is instrumental to the salvation of others, can any man be ambitious of succouring the *sick or maimed*, the *naked* or the *hungry*, and not grasp at the means of *saving a soul from perdition*?

This is the simple state of the question before us; and though the means of saving souls are very numerous, in common life, where there is no charitable institution in the case, yet in this *particular*, the ordinary methods do not seem adequate to the evil. Mankind are afraid of the *infection*, and require the *patient* to pass through some kind of *purgation* before *she* is admitted within their walls. — Think seriously of these things: give us your assistance, and be assured that I am, Yours, &c.

*The absurd reasoning advanced by one part of mankind in
favor of fornication.*

LETTER VI.

To the same.

THE consideration of the *Magdalane* Charity has led me into a thousand *serious thoughts* which might not otherwise have occurred to my mind, and, I hope, I shall be the *better* for them. If I am *wrong* correct me; if *right*, be you also as much the better for them as you can.

There seems to have been a complaint existing between the sexes, with regard to the treatment of each other, ever since our great ancestor was *tempted* by his *wife* to transgress the commands of God. But our subject at present relates to the temptations of *concubinage*, and *promiscuous commerce*, and the calamities which arise from the *neglect of marriage*.

Less deplorable were the evil, if the *female* only were in fault; but we see her often tempted by arguments, which experience of the miserable consequences do not countervail. Among other absurdities, how often have I heard the common cant of libertines of both sexes, “*that God never made man to be damned.*” If they know their own meaning, it must be this, “*that man is MADE;*” “*and his maker certainly intended his happiness, therefore*” “*he must be happy; and tho’ the same God that made him, has*” “*declared the conditions on which that happiness is to be ac-*”
“*quired,*

“ *quired, yet man may venture to pass them over, as if there were no conditions at all.*” Shall we call this an *opinion*? It is an *absurdity* as great as was ever entertained by the pagan world. It tacitly implies a *conscious guilt*, and puts all vices on the same level, which is more than they mean to say, and therefore renders the *absurdity* the more *glaring*.

The *learned* and the *illiterate* may equally *bewilder* themselves in their enquiries, but still they must recur to this *conclusion*, that we were *made free*, and are *rational agents*; that we *are free*, and as such, a *free and rational* obedience must, from the very nature of things, be expected from us. Could God be the judge of mankind if there was *nothing to be judged of*? — And what *sentence* could he pass, were there no *punishment* for *offenders*? — And *what* can men be *punished* for, after death, but their *disobedience* to the divine command? — Wretched mortals, thus to endeavor to put out the eyes of their own understanding, that under the shelter of darkness they may gratify the animal part of their composition, or please some favorite passion, for a *moment*, at the risk of everlasting punishment.

Thus the *weak*, and the *wicked* part of mankind, generally incline to adapt their *notions* to their *practice*; and talk of the infinite *mercies* of God, as if they meant only to *flatter* him out of his *justice*. As it is *blasphemy* to *challenge* our Maker for creating us what *we are*, or for not making the *conditions* of our happiness *different from what they are*; it must be the grossest *folly* to imagine he will reverse his

decrees. If we really believe in him; if we have any pretence to the *privileges of reason*, we shall find the highest consolation in the contemplation of his *mercy*, whilst the terror of his *justice* will keep us in awe: we shall do honor to the *power* he has entrusted us with; and receive with joy the *assurances* he has promised: and thus, instead of *rebell*ing against his *authority*, we shall find infinite reason to pay divine honors to his *clemency*, as the supreme lawgiver; and to *adore* his *goodness*, as the *tender parent* of mankind.

Would to God these no-reasoners would remember that we are apt to form our belief, by our *practice*. Every one may see, if they chuse to look, what God has been pleased to reveal of himself; and what his *will* is towards mankind. Those who fondly imagine that he means the contrary of what he *says*; or that our revelation is *fabulous*, may as well discard *christianity* at once. They must either give up the *bible* and *testament*, or renounce their *reason*, or acknowledge their *sins*. Thought may be in some degree *banished*, and the mind become *insensible* of *fear*, or *sorrow*; but will the *soul* therefore cease to be immortal? — Or will a God of *infinite justice* not punish for offences, the *habitual exercise* of which, occasions this very *insensibility*?

Neither *divines* nor *philosophers* are agreed, how far virtue is *natural* to the soul of man: This is a speculative enquiry, but it is *universally* confessed that man is by nature a *reasonable Being*, and that *reason* declares against every thing we believe to be *vicious*. Whatever name we
give

give to the *propensity* in question, we know that it *unhinges* the whole frame, and generally distempers the *soul*, as well as the *body*. It is amazing what *havoc* it makes with the minds of some females: they seem to acquire with it every vice upon earth. Dropping this dreadful consideration, for the present, we may easily discover that the express command of God, as handed down by his once chosen people, as well as the *spirit*, and whole context of the *christian law*, fixes the conditions of this gratification: and those who have kept alive any sparks of their *native modesty*, and are not given up to what the royal prophet calls an *impudent mind*, will ever lament the evil, if they cannot *cure* it: in the mean while they stand obliged to carry on the warfare of life, lest the world should be involved in anarchy and confusion, and over-run by this vice. And as it is the *duty* of such persons, so it ever will be their *honor*, to *endeavor* to restore things to that order which the great author of nature intended they should be in, namely, that *reason* should give laws to *passion* and *appetite*, and not be rendered subservient to them.

Life is called a warfare: it is particularly so to a *christian*; and were you to live in the world as much as I do, and converse with all kinds of people, you would think yourself a *soldier* in good earnest. Let us strive to render our *victories*, if we obtain any, subservient to the happiness of others, still keeping in view the *great end* for which we *contend*. Heaven grant you *life* and *health*, I am persuaded you will employ them to the honor of your Maker. Farewell.

Yours, &c.

False reasonings upon incontinency. The benefit of the Magdalene House, with respect to the impressions it may make on young minds.

LETTER VII.

To the same.

YOU who have been bred up from your youth, in the fear of God, may be surprized to hear people professing christianity, conjure up difficulties, and amuse themselves with fine spun arguments on the subject of fornication: but how clear soever the precept is from the words of our Saviour, as well as his Apostles, I am sorry to tell you there are many, of different ranks, who exert their ingenuity to find reasons to shake it off, and make a religion adapted to their inclinations: at the same time it is about a million to one but that he who argues thus, practises the vice first, and finds reasons for it afterwards: or makes a system of his own, in order to reconcile his mind to the practice of it.

There is an evident inconsistency in the character of this nation. Every one thinks for himself, which is the natural effect of the great freedom we enjoy: and yet almost every one is a dupe to fashion, not only in the cut of his coat, but also in the model of his opinion and moral practice, according to the station of life in which he is placed, and the company he converses with. When this prevails

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in following *good*, it is sometimes ascribed to our *imitative* faculties ; when *bad*, to *corruption* of heart. A fondness for *novelty*, I believe predominates in both cases ; but our *good sense* has seldom any great share in either.

The *plea* of *antiquity* cannot vindicate *error* ; but one would naturally conclude that the opinions which the *wisest* and *best* of *men* have adopted, through a long succession of ages, upon no less a subject than *everlasting bliss* or *misery*, such opinions having all the marks of integrity and purity of mind on their side, should be preferred to *notions* and *conceits* which stand on no better foundation than the *practice* of those who give a loose to their appetites. Yet this is *the error* that prevails among a certain class of men with regard to the criminal gratification in question, with respect to the *false reasonings* they maintain concerning it.

And what are the *consequences* of such *absurd notions* ? The more sober part of mankind of the *middle* stations in life go on in a certain equal pace, but many of the *higher* classes, from *false* reasoning, and many of the *lower* from *no reasoning* at all, are apt to go into *strange excesses*. The common people copy after the *superior orders*, but not having the same motives to *external decency*, give themselves up to their *appetites*, and too many of them become totally depraved in their manners.

It might be happy if the clergy were to make more frequent appeals to the *hearts* of *their audience*, from daily experience of the sad effects of this vice. The *hopes* of *heaven*, and the *fears* of *hell*, might then influence the lives of

some, more than they do at present. . And if when this *illegal* commerce happens to disturb the repose of *families*, more were put to the issue of *religion*, and less to *temporal punishment*, we should see the parent less *indulgent* to the *son*, and in many cases less severe to the *daughter* ; fewer *young men* would go astray, and consequently fewer *young women* be debauched ; the punishment would be more equal ; the *man* would be more *reproached*, and the *woman* not so often plunged into such *misery*, as to be excluded even from the *hopes* of a recovery.

Upon the great principle of *mercy* and *commiseration* is the *Magdalene Charity* founded ; and I apprehend it will in *some degree* correct the abuse I have just mentioned ; For as it would be absurd to suppose it of much use, unless the parties offending have such a *sense of their conduct*, as inclines them most heartily to make their peace with heaven ; when they are so inclined, it supplies the means of doing it, which could not be found, by many *poor wretches*, before the establishment of this institution. This being done, every thing that is interesting to the *virtuous* part of mankind will follow of course ; so that it is hardly in the nature of things, but that with *proper care*, this charity must prove a remedy for many calamities *past*, and many which are *to come* ; whilst it influences, in a *gentle*, and almost imperceptible manner, the conduct even of those who, at first view, may be either tempted to *ridicule* it, or think it a *visionary project*.

As a discourse on death is apt to make the deeper impression on the mind, upon occasion of a funeral, so will the consideration of the breach of the christian law, with respect to the vice in question, in a place, where a number of wretches appear at once, as so many monuments of the *divine vengeance*, demonstrated by the misery which induced them to seek for shelter there; and of the *divine mercy* in the protection afforded them. The boldest violator of the *christian law* is apt to feel himself *dismayed* upon such occasions; and his recourse to such arguments as I have mentioned, appear so much the more as *arrant trifling with his soul!*

If you bring your son to town to show him this great scene of every thing that is good, and every thing that is bad, rather carry him to see the *repentance* than the *crime*. The man who conducted his son to a *brothel* to show him *obscenity* in all its *horrid* forms, did not consider that the gratification might be obtained with *elegancy*, and that the nearer the *temptation*, the farther distant the *motive* to resist it: but that must needs appear in its true light as a *crime*, which so many sincerely *repent* of. I question if there can be any *safety* to a young man, in *this town*, but from one of these causes; a competent degree of *native modesty*, or a mind well fortified with *religion*; and perhaps it is owing to the united force of both that the happier part of mankind *escape the snare*. *Prudence* and *fear* may do something to avoid *discredit* or *disease*, but where a young man has money, his *prudence*, if not assisted by *religion*, will be chiefly exercised in *concealing* his amours.

It is an admirable *picture* which we find in a *modern dress*, in the wise man's description of a harlot *, the fashion of *times* not having altered, in this particular, in any age or country ; though I believe there neither are, nor ever were, any harlots so little observant of *external decency* as those in the streets of *London*. You know the poet to whom we are obliged, for the following verses.

MY SON, *th' instruction that my words impart,*
Grave on the living tablet of thy heart,
And all the wholesome precepts that I give,
Observe with strictest reverence, and live.
Let all thy homage be to wisdom paid,
Seek her protection, and implore her aid :
That she may keep thy soul from harm secure,
And turn thy footsteps from the HARLOT's door,
Who with curs'd charms lures th' unwearied in,
And soothes with flattery their souls to sin.

ONCE from my window, as I cast my eye
 On those that pass'd, in giddy numbers by,
 A youth, among the foolish youths I spy'd,
 Who took not sacred wisdom for his guide.

JUST as the sun withdrew his cooler light,
 And evening soft led on the shades of night,
 He stole, in covert twilight, to his fate,
 And pass'd the corner near the HARLOT's gate ;
 When, lo, a WOMAN comes ! —————

Loose

* Vid. Pag. 189.

*Loose her attire, and such her glaring dress,
 As aptly did the harlot's mind express;
 Subtle she is, and practis'd in the arts,
 By which the wanton conquer heedless arts:
 Stubborn and loud she is: she hates her home,
 Varying her place and form, she loves to roam;
 Now she's within, now in the streets do's stray,
 Now at each corner stands, and waits her prey.
 The youth she seiz'd; and laying now aside
 All modesty, the female's justest pride,
 She said with an embrace, here at my house
 Peace-offerings are, this day I paid my vows.
 I therefore came abroad to meet my dear
 And, lo, in happy hour, I find thee here.*

*UPON her tongue did such smooth mischief dwell,
 And from her lips such welcome flatt'ry fell,
 Th' unguarded youth, in silken fetters ty'd,
 Resign'd his reason, and with ease comply'd.
 Thus does the ox to his own slaughter go,
 And thus is senseless of th' impending blow.
 Thus flies the simple bird into the snare,
 That skilful fowlers for his life prepare.
 But let MY SONS attend, attend may they
 Whom youthful vigour may to sin betray;
 Let them false charmers fly, and guard their hearts
 Against the wily wanton's pleasing arts.
 With care direct their steps, nor turn astray
 To tread the paths of her deceitful way;
 Lest they too late of her fell power complain,
 And fall, where many mightier have been slain.*

If

If a *young man* has a competent share of understanding, and compares this *description* with what he sees with his *own eyes*, and hears with his *own ears*, every *night* and almost *every day* he walks the streets in this town, may we not conclude that it will put him on his *guard*? And whatever his companions should suggest to him, on the article of *fornication*, if under the *Mosaic* dispensation it was considered as *criminal* in the sight of God; and promiscuous commerce was productive of many *temporal evils*, though he should never have read his *New Testament*, he will hardly think this vice *consistent* with *christianity*, or agreeable to the laws of his country. I am, &c.

Reasons against libertinism from considerations of humanity and the analogy of things.

LETTER VIII.

To the same.

THERE are many secret springs which feed our depravity; and men easily convert blessings into curses. Our fondness for amusement, and the expensive pleasures which *riches* have introduced, make us greater *triflers in religion* than if we were poorer, and *obliged* to live more *collectedly*. The *infidel* refinements which some men of education have rendered *fashionable*, may also arise from the same source. In the mean while I apprehend that

that no women upon earth, of the higher ranks, have nobler sentiments of *honor* than ours; and the reason is plain: for *trifling* as their education may be, in several instances; yet upon the whole they are better taught than the *women* of most other countries. But they are at least as great dupes to *fashion* as men; and some of their *amusements* carry them farther than is consistent with that *native modesty*, that *genuine simplicity* which characterise an amiable woman; and which *Milton* calls

“*Woman’s domestic honor and chief praise.*”

Even our *theatres*, which might be rendered the *noblest scenes of the most rational and instructive entertainment*, in their present mode of exhibition, rather corrupt the heart than purify it. What the poets say is indubitably true, and particularly as addressed to the female world.

No pardon; vile obscenity should find,

Tho’ wit and art conspire to move your mind.

A nation’s taste depends on you.

—— *Perhaps a nation’s virtue too.*

O think, *how glorious ’twere to raise*

A theatre to virtue’s praise.

Where no indignant blush might rise;

No wit be taught to plead for vice;

But every young attentive ear

Imbibe the precepts living there;

Ana

And every unexperienced breast
 There feel its own rude hints express'd,
 And, 'waken'd by the glowing scene,
 Unfold the worth that lurks within.

We have not, even the *ambition* of making our amusements tend to the greatest ends of life, which they might do, and not be the less *amusements*: instead of their being *as they are*, they might be schools of virtue. Though some of our *modern pastimes* may promote matrimony, they are often a means of *preventing* it, and still oftener of rendering it *uneasy*, if not *unhappy*, when it is made. The reason is plain; such a habit of *dissipation* turns the *current* of the affections in both sexes creates an appetite to *variety*, and is the cause that many, naturally *well inclined*, not only live as it were on the *verge of ruin* with respect to *chastity*, but also in point of *prudence*, with regard to the honest means of their support. *Sober domestic pleasures*, and the *joys* of religion, move on too *gently*; these do not agitate their passions, and therefore they seek for others, *at all events*.

The *common people* following the example, without the *advantages of education*, the consequences are often seen in such *promiscuous commerce*, as *can by no means* be reconciled on the *christian* plan. Thus a neglect of the *divine prohibition* predominates amongst great numbers of people so far, that the *word of God*, though very *explicit* and free from *ambiguity*, *seems to be of no effect*: forgetting that if we reject the authority of the New Testament in

one case, we may reject it in all cases, and make an end of the *christian religion*. It may be observed that most other breaches of the divine law are either *unpremeditated*, or committed under a *consciousness* of the *guilt*; but this is done, not only *premeditatedly*, but seemingly *without any such consciousness*; clearly demonstrating that the *spirit of modesty* is at as low an *ebb*, as the *ignorance* and *inattention* of the vulgar *flow high*; and that both together *overwhelm* their sense of their religion. What numerous mischiefs this may create, even in a *political* view, is hard to determine, but in a *religious* light it is *terrible*.

This is not distinguished as the *age of libertinism* with respect to *intrigues*; yet with people of *education* the evil lies deep. They acknowledge that the duties which *christianity* requires are *noble*, *exalted*, *delightful*: but they are extremely reluctant to entertain the *practical belief* that the *religion of Christ* is, at the same time, a *religion of self-denial*. Though it so clearly opposes the propensity to the sin in question, yet from the opportunities I have, of hearing the *sentiments* of *the gay world*, and being informed of their *practices*, I know they endeavor to *puzzle*, and render the precept *ambiguous*, as if what is generally denominated the *lawless commerce of the sexes*, were not *lawless*.

As to the religious *anxiety* of fathers, upon the subject of their sons falling from their *innocence* with respect to women, I am afraid it is not much in *fashion*, in *London*, whatever it may be with you in the *country*; and yet the *wise man's* recommendation is just as *true* now, as it was

so

I

so many hundred years ago; and surely as much in the *Christian æra* as it was under the reign of *Solomon*.

Do you now hear of many who consider the story of *Joseph* as a conquest over himself, that glitters more than *renown in arms*? Or does the *continence of Scipio* fire their breast with a higher sense of glory, than the most successful *vicious amour*? You remember he is introduced speaking thus to *Indibilis*. “It is not the manner of the *Romans* to use all the power they justly may: we fight not to *ravage* countries; or break through the *ties of humanity*: I am acquainted with your worth, and your *interest in this lady*: fortune has made me your *master*, but I desire to be your *friend*. This is your *wife*, take her, and may the gods bless you with her. Far be it from *Scipio* to purchase a loose and *momentary pleasure* at the rate of making an *honest man unhappy*.”

The historian continues “*Indibilis's* heart was too full to make him any answer, but he threw himself at the feet of the general, and wept aloud. The *captive lady* fell into the same posture, and they both remained so, till the father burst into the following words: “*Oh divine Scipio! The gods have given you more than human virtue! Oh glorious leader! Oh wondrous youth! Does not that obliged virgin give you, while she prays to the gods for your prosperity, and thinks you sent down from them, raptures above all the transports which you could have reaped from the possession of her injured person?*” The temperate *Scipio* answered him without much emotion, and saying, “*Father be a friend to Rome,*” retired.

This

This was very pompous flattery, for *Scipio* must have acted like a villain if he had done otherwise. But when we consider the principles on which the *christian* acts, the rewards which are promised him, and the punishments with which he is threatened; to fall with any temptation; is enough to create blushes in any man's cheeks who talks of it. But if we speak of a *christian hero*, as we do now of a *Roman captain*, there can be no doubt of his acting like himself; the great complaint is that *christian heroism* is not in fashion: and that those who pretend to thirst most after *glory*, seem to think least about it; whilst the bulk of our fellow-creatures follow the dictates of their *animal* part, troubling themselves too little with arguments drawn from the purity required of the followers of *Christ*, or the nature of the offence with regard to civil society. Thus it happens that *prudence* or *shame*, with respect to *high life*, and the *rod of the magistrate* with regard to the *vulgar*, seem to have a greater influence on their conduct, than the motives derived from the *fear of God*, expressed in the *hope of eternal bliss*, or the *fear of everlasting punishments*.

I do not mean that this nation is more wicked than the rest of mankind: I believe that we are as rational in *faith*, and as sincere in *practice*, as any other: but it is not a comparison with *other nations* that will avail us; nor is our *national character* so much in question; it is the *lives of individuals*, compared with the *written laws of God*. But because in general we have more liberty, think more *freely*, and have clearer notions of *religion*, than perhaps

any other people on the face of the whole earth, it is therefore the more *melancholy* to reflect, how it comes to operate so little in the *most momentous concern of life*.

The least consideration must lead the *candid* and *ingenuous* part of mankind into the firmest belief, that this commerce is forbidden, were it only from observation of the *pernicious tendency* of it to every branch of *moral rectitude*: for though all who trespass do not pass from one crime to another, yet the greater portion of the women who give themselves up to this practice, become *so depraved*, that many doubt to this day if the *Magdalane Charity* can recal any of them to a sense of duty.

If we also observe the *happiness* which attends the strict observance of the *nuptial bonds*, and the *misery* which usually waits on the breach of them, there can be no doubt of the *malignity* of this vice. The customs of the world cannot alter the *divine order* and constitution of things, or abrogate the *divine law*: and whatever the wisdom of providence might permit, at some periods of time, and under some circumstances, as to a *plurality* of wives, still they were *wives*: but *christianity* allows but of *one*; and it is evident, that this scheme tends to the highest perfection human nature is capable of. *Women* are undeniably made as *free* as *men*, though *subordination* is essential to the well-being of life. If *inclination* were the rule of conduct, the *one* might as well plead for *variety* as the *other*: and if notwithstanding all the injunctions of *divine* and *human laws*, such *infinite calamities* are introduced into the world by *promiscuous* commerce,

merce, and the *invasion of property*, what could be expected, were it guarded by *no law*, but a total *subversion of all government*? We must suppose the whole constitution of things to be changed to be able to *reason* upon it. The tortures of *jealousy* must no longer have any place in the human soul; nor *slighted love* have any pangs. If we allow the *woman* to be as *free* as the *man*, we must adhere to the doctrine of *one to one*, or renounce our superiority over *brutes* in the instance of the continuation of our species.

In countries where one man has many women, the women are not considered as entitled to the same *common freedom*, nor are they *christians*; but still they look on that *man* to be the most *virtuous* who is contented with *one woman*. Upon any other system, there can be no *security* in that property, which had always a *peculiar sanctity* in the most unenlightened ages of the world. In proportion as *men* have been *civilized*, the chief happiness of *social ties* has arisen from the same cause. It is thus *reason* and *sense*, *duty* and *appetite* become one object; the line is drawn between the *animal* and *intellectual* nature of the human species, and the *divine order* is observed. *Christianity* has fixed the *union*, and made it *indissoluble*; and except for certain reasons which *human legislators* have wisely determined to adopt, of *two evils* to prefer that which *humanly speaking* seems to be the *least*, it is never dissolved.

I am insensibly led by this thought to a beautiful passage in *Milton*, than whom no one seems to have been a greater master of the subject, and not the less for hav-

ing himself experienced the *sorrows* as well as the *joys* of the nuptial state. He writes like a *philosopher* and a *christian*, as well as a *statesman* and a *subject*.

“ Hail wedded love ! mysterious law ! true source

“ Of human offspring ! sole propriety

“ In paradise, of all things common else !

“ By thee adult'rous lust was driv'n from man

“ Among the bestial herds to range : by thee,

“ Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,

“ Relations dear, and all the charities

“ Of father, son, and brother, first were known !

“ Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets !

“ Here love his golden shafts employs ; here lights

“ His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings :

“ Here reigns and revels ; not in the bought smile

“ Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unindear'd

“ Casual fruition ; nor in court amours,

“ Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,

“ Or serenade, which the starv'd lover sings

“ To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.”

We may also observe, that as *conjugal* love is the best security of a *state* ; *fornication*, comparatively considered, tends to the *dissolution* of it. What does it avail to shut up women like *animals*, not to be trusted with their own liberty, as practised in *Asia* ? Can they avoid the evils of *discord* among those who have an *equal right* to those affections, which it is impossible a man can *equally divide* ?

divide? And is the increase of mankind promoted, whilst they are robb'd of the *peace* and *harmony* of *society*?

In the case where there is most *elegancy*, and where, if we drop the consideration of *religion*, nothing seems to be wanting but the priest to perform the ceremonies appointed by *human laws*; what an *anxious* situation it is, those who are called *kept mistresses* are best able to say! If they *do not* love a man, they are but a small remove from the *mercenary harlot*; and if they *do love him*, what dreadful moments they pass in reflecting on the precarious nature of their *contract*! On the other hand, for a man to be bound to his *mistress* whom he does *not love*, seems to be of all states the most *irksome*; and to be true and *constant* to her, whether he loves *her or not*, is being a *husband*, not only without the honor due to the character, but suffering the disgrace in his own person, in the person of the *woman*, and in their *common progeny*. Could we put religion out of the question, there are but few instances in which this kind of compact is not full of *anguish* and *distress*. Of this, women must be allowed the *best judges*: they feel the *evil* most, and have most reason to complain of the violation of the *common rights of human nature*, with regard to the *equality* of the sexes, and their *mutual obligations* to be *true* to each other, from the time they come together, let the circumstances be what they may. If a man pleads that he found a woman polluted to his hands, he may as well urge that when a woman has once transgressed, no further ceremony need be used; her soul is of no va-

lue, and though an *accountable being*, she is no more worth preserving than a *dog* or a *cat*.

There seems to be a kind of *natural justice* due to those who seek relief from *misery*, occasioned by their being *debauched* and *abandoned*. *Men* are confessedly the *guardians* of *women* in so many instances, that it is almost absurd to doubt that Providence intended they should be so; but it is no less evident that when they are not restrained by motives of obedience to the *divine law*, they do many acts of *injustice*, and violate the *strongest obligations*, and yet keep out of the reach of *human laws*. There are some christian countries * where it is said marriage must succeed *cohabitation*; but I presume the law is not observed, without many *exceptions*. Mankind are too depraved, for such a law in its *utmost force*; as the law-makers would find themselves too closely bound.

The world has indeed introduced a motive of restraint which they call *honor*: this is sometimes of great use to keep us in *awe*, as *guardians* of the sex; but as every one puts what signification he pleases to the word, we must not be surprized that so few acknowledge they act *without honor* in this instance. If a man does a *premeditated act*, which from the nature of it may lay the foundation of another's misery, if such misery does really follow, I do not comprehend how, in *honor*, he can leave the party without taking his share in her sufferings. Though the unguarded youth may sometimes justly complain of the *snare laid for him*, great *cruelty* as well as *injustice* are often

* *Denmark*.

often practised by men, without any imputation of *dishonor*, demonstrating the absurdity of adopting any rule of life, but such as is founded in reason, and obedience to the *divine law*.

This consideration is recommended in very *emphatical* terms by the ingenious Mr. *Dodd*, in the sermon which I sent you upon the subject of the *Magdalene Charity*: with a very little change of his words, he says,

“ Motives of *honor* should certainly influence many, and those more especially who have led women astray. If such *reflect* at all, the upbraidings of conscience will convince them that they cannot *exert* themselves *too much* to *repair* the ruin they have occasioned. In the *silent hour*, when *PASSION* is *hushed*, and *REASON* will be heard, suppose the *wretched unfortunate girl*, (of whom we see so many introduced to *misery, disease, and death*) now about to perish in *extreme distress*; suppose her thus expostulating — ‘ See to what thy *unbridled passion*, and *seducing lust* have brought me! Late *gay* in beauty, and *elegant* in charms, thy heart was captivated, and every art was used to *win* and to *destroy* me.—Thou didst *prevail*, and I was *undone*! Unkind, and cruel, thou didst *abandon* me! Thy passion *fated*, thou left’st me to all the *extremity* of woe! Now see the sad *end* of thy *triumph*! Oh look upon me, and see what cause thou hast to *exult*! Behold these *wretched tatters* which scarcely cover my *diseased limbs*; where are the remains of their *former loveliness*? See my *tongue* cleaves to the roof of my mouth with *hunger*, and with *anguish*. But worst of all my *soul*!—Here I am tormented

with *every kind of sorrow*: dire consciousness of my *past misdoings* torments and racks my heart. See my body consigned in early youth to so *severe an end*; and my soul — mercy, mercy, O *gracious Father* — my soul in *horrible danger of eternal death*! O see me thus distressed, and *forsaken*! LOOK, and REPENT, and AMEND *thy ways*!”

Let any one contemplate *this picture*, and I defy him to *laugh*, though he should have deluded a *hundred girls*: and let him who has deluded only *one*, consider what he owes to *God* and his country, that he may do all that is in his power to prevent her becoming a *victim* to pollution. — The man who is only in the *company* of one who takes a *purse*, the loss of which may not create a *moment's pain* to him that loses it, is by the *rigor* of the laws *condemned to die*! — Consider the actions in *themselves*, and consider them in their *consequences to society*. Allow the *first* to be very *dangerous*, though the purse were demanded by presenting a *brass ink-stand* instead of a *pistol*; but the latter is *extremely pernicious* to the peace and happiness of families; to the health of the thoughtless part of mankind, by communicating a disease; and at length by the party exposing herself to a *promiscuous commerce*, and in the issue involving her *body and soul* in destruction! Those who attend the *Magdalene house*, and see the *objects* who are admitted there, have the most striking sense of the force of this argument. ADIEU.

Yours.

Errors

Errors in education. The deplorable state of common prostitutes, and the dangers of a misguided severity in some cases.

LETTER IX.

To the same.

LITTLE philosophers often complain as if it was in their power to rectify the evils they feel, by changing the nature of the thing complained of, whereas the remedy is in *changing their own minds*. Women will ever complain of the *transgressions of men*, as well as of their own *folly*, tho' it sometimes happens that they *tempt the man*. In general it must be granted that *he* is the *aggressor*; it is *he* who contrives the means of gratifying himself at *their expence*, and he often passes with impunity, when the *woman* suffers: yet upon the whole it is very *happy* that the laws of honor, in regard to *chastity*, are so much more rigid towards women than men. If *men* were *punished*, *women* would not be *less punishable*; and the most certain way of making *men virtuous*, is for *women* to be so; and would they be *more virtuous*, if the *laws of honor* were *less strict*? Vice creates *great misery* as the case now stands, would it create less if this circumstance were changed? This state of the argument does not render *cruelty* or *injustice* to women *less criminal* in the man; it is an aggravation of his conduct on the principle

ciple of *honor*. For if the *laws* of the land take no cognizance of his actions; according to the most refined notions of *honor*, there arises so much the stronger motive to the observance of justice and compassion.

If *virtue* is the supreme happiness of accountable beings, that state of life which renders virtue the most easy, must be the *best*. Therefore if *fear*, and a *sense of shame*, operate as strongly as any other passions, it must follow, that in proportion as *women* are more awed by *fear* and *shame* than *men* are, they are more *happy* than *men*. She who argues from the conduct of men, as if *example* could warrant *libertinism*, contradicts *reason* and *common sense*, as well as *religion*. Therefore, however unequal the judgment of the world may seem, it would be dangerous to solicit for a *reverse* of it, lest the *remedy* should be worse than the *disease*: for whatever may be thought, by those who are more inclined to find motives for deviating from the paths of virtue, than good reasons to walk steadily in them, it is more easy to imagine than express, the effects of a change of custom and opinion, even supposing that the crime in question is, in the sight of God, the same in both sexes.

Wherever the fault lies, this seems to be obvious, that were we to take half as much pains to impress the minds of the female world with just notions of their condition, and how to deport themselves with humility, as we do to feed their vanity, we should not see so many victims offered to incontinency. Vanity, and the love of show, have hurried more women into perdition, than all the other devices

devices of the *devil*, or *man*. *Adulation* intoxicates men : admiration is apt to turn the brains of women ; whilst fond notions of *dominion* have often perverted their hearts, till, like tyrants, they abused their *real power*, and fell a sacrifice to those whom they might have governed. For tho' with regard to the *ill use* of such power, the poet justly observes of *men* that they are

“ Not deceived

“ But fondly overcome by female charm.”

the same power being employed for good purposes, would certainly produce good ; and taking the sex as we find it, women seem, from this very influence over mens minds, to have an equal share in the *dominion* which heaven has given mankind over the world.

Beauty, if attended with good sense and modesty, bids fair for success. The *Italians* say a handsome girl is born married : but this is not always true of the vain, and still less of the profligate ; nor would beauty be generally so much prized, or so often abused, if it were considered as subject to a heavy tax, from the danger it is exposed to.

“ Beauty, thou art a fair, but fading flow'r,

“ The tender prey of ev'ry coming hour :

“ In youth, thou comet-like, art gaz'd upon,

“ But art portentous to thyself alone ! ”

In tracing effects back to their causes, it seems very reasonable to conclude that many of our unhappy prostitutes
would

would have been in the full enjoyment of all those *comforts*, which their natural advantages afforded them, had they been better instructed in the great duty of *reconciling themselves to the condition in which Providence had placed them*. Few women of low fortunes have power to adventure much, except in *love*; but to one that aspires high, and succeeds, five hundred fall as sacrifices.

Every father has it in his power to breed up his children in the *fear of God*, but if he can afford them a good education, it should be his task to give his daughters *masculine sense*, as well as *feminine delicacy*; and tho' learning, properly so called, is out of the question, he ought to instil as noble ideas in their minds as in those of his sons: *childish fears* and *fantastic hopes* should be ever esteemed as *childish*; and both in *high* life and in *low*, there is just the same motives to distinguish *good* and *evil*.

In the *foolishness* of mens hearts they are apt to entertain an opinion of a *superiority* over *women*, very different from that which the *author of nature* has appointed; and for want of a *proper* deference or consideration for the sex, as *creatures accountable for their own actions*, men are not under such awe, as this consideration would excite, and are therefore betrayed into *transgressions*, which they would not otherwise have committed. Whether a man's principle be *honor* or *religion*, he may run a risk in *his own person*, which he would not chuse to do, if it involved another.

Virtue has the same charms to captivate the hearts of women ; and religion the same power to create a detestation of vice and folly in their minds, as in ours ; nor do the distinctions of fortune, I apprehend, make any difference in the sight of God : but if we neglect to give them principles, and then abuse the powers of language and reason, which those distinctions may give us, to pervert the minds of the illiterate, the crime is double.

Whatever those who have examined only the foul corners of the heart, or pryed only into the darkest scenes of iniquity, may believe of women who have wandered far from the paths of virtue, there is a native ingenuousness in the minds of many, even of these prostitutes, that inclines them to wish for the means of returning again to their duty. Custom and habit indeed take off some part of the force of misery itself, and the heart which does not burst with a sense of injuries, frequently becomes callous and insensible of them. This must be the case of many prostitutes, or they could not be so blind to their own sad condition : they would discover the extravagance of revenging upon themselves the crimes of others ; or if they were conscious their misfortunes were owing to their own indiscretion, they would find but very little reason to live in infamy, because their passions once betrayed them. The crime of the child is apt to occasion a crime in the parent, and love, or lust, or folly, is not worse on one side, than fierce anger on the other. So many dreadful misfortunes would not happen, if the parent or the friend thought of the temptation as well as of the crime, and considered that
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when young women are left to struggle with the *tyranny of bawds*, and the *insolence of debauchees*, followed close by a train of evils, *infamy, poverty and disease*, they must die a *miserable death*, without the least chance of repentance.

If their *crimes* are black, and their *folly* great, their *misery* keeps pace with both. It is no secret, either to the *virtuous* or the *vicious*, that many prostitutes are so much a disgrace to human nature, that they are in a *worse condition* than even the *brute* that perishes. Every other *animal* is obedient to his *appetite*, but appetite has frequently no share in the *promiscuous* commerce of these women. It is observed, that notwithstanding the reputed humanity of this nation, *harlots* are not treated with such *gross indignities* in any country as in this; so that one would almost wonder, how it happens that the same *pride*, which led many of them into the snare, does not induce more of them to *forsake* their evil course, at all *adventures*.—Every one must see, from this single circumstance, how much this execrable *habit enslaves* the mind. And as there is no nation which carries every thing that is *vile*, as well as every thing that is *virtuous*, higher than this, there is no city in the world, where greater enormities prevail, than in this vast metropolis.

There is an elegance in *vice* as well as in *virtue*, and though it is the more *dangerous*, in a religious view, on this account, yet still it is a safe-guard against those *disorders* to which a *brutish* and *profligate* life exposes mankind. There is a certain *delicacy* of manners essential to *good order* in virtuous life; and the distinctions which the

sexes

sexes shew to each other, is one great means of supporting that *order*. It is therefore the more shocking to see these women treated like *dogs*; and to hear those tongues, which the *God of nature* designed should soften the distresses of human life, and give a relish to its joys, uttering the *highest indecencies*, and the most dreadful imprecations! That which excites our commiseration, may also rouse our resentments: there are some of these wretched women, who being under no awe of the *magistrate*, forget all distinctions; and being heated with liquor, hang upon the virtuous as well as the vicious, and sometimes, I fear, drag along with them those who had no intention to become their prey: in the mean while the modest matron is offended as she passes along; and the innocent virgin often suffers the violence of hearing the language of the stews. Every one feels with sorrow the want of common decency and good order. These are evils which call for redress; and if they cannot be removed, they may be mitigated.

If we consider these young persons as born in a free country, where pure religion is professed; some of them educated in the principles of virtue; all of them entitled to the protection of men, and most assuredly intended by the wise and beneficent Father of mankind, as their partners in the social joys of life; can we then turn the glass, and behold them, wicked as they are, the abject slaves of an abandoned procurefs, sold both body and soul for half a crown, without being fired with a generous indignation for their cause, and for the cause of humanity!

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We see, how deplorable *their* circumstances are; who are thus abandoned; and whilst there are so many *ministers* of *Lucifer* supported in *affluence*, it is no wonder to behold the *victim to lust* frequently ornamented with *elegancy*, and taught to practise all the *blandishments* which can infatuate a young man's mind. It may be said of the harlot, that *her ways* do, literally, *lead to the grave*; but the destruction of *health*, or even the loss of life, are not the greatest evils which happen. As the expences created by the extravagance of a woman, are oftentimes followed by the sale of a *man's honor* in higher life; *illegal* commerce among men of meaner condition, is often the cause of their becoming sacrifices in the hands of *unskilful* surgeons; whilst *others*, being no longer able to supply by *fair means*, the extravagance of *bad women*, are prompted to commit *desperate* actions, which bring them to *untimely* death by the hands of justice: and I believe it will be found, amongst *malefactors*, that *two in three* are in these circumstances.

But the institution of the *Magdalane House* calls on us also to contemplate the situation of *parents* with regard to *domestic comforts*, and those pleasing expectations which are often plucked in the bud, and blasted by the pernicious contrivances of *bawds*. Their *agonies* do not usually rise so high for their *sons*, as for their *daughters*; nor does the *fear* of *everlasting* punishment make so strong an impression, as the dread of *temporal* evils; but in the *first* case, the distress is equal with regard to both: in the *last*, the *parent* and the *daughter* are the most *pitiable*! If we see her deluded

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by the *intrigues* of an *artful seducer* who puts on the shape of a *sincere friend*, or an *abandoned procuress* in the disguise of a *saint*: if we follow her through the beaten track, from *guilt* to *disease*; and behold her languishing under a *venereal* complaint, still subject to the *arbitrary* will of an *imperious mistress*, who leaps over all the *boundaries of humanity*, to gratify her own *insatiable* avarice: what a *dreadful scene* it exhibits! If we exclude the thoughts of an *hereafter*, still it creates *anguish* in his breast, who *feels only as a man*; and what must the *parent feel*! The ingenious Mr. Dodd in his first sermon on the *Magdalane Charity* has exhorted us in very *pathetic* terms. Speaking of *parents* he says, nearly in these words: “Whenever you view the children of your bosom, your *daughters*, like lovely flowers, blooming around you; consider how often that *very beauty* hath proved a fatal snare: consider how many there are, whose *passions* have no *law*, and whose *lust* has no *mercy*. And while you are moved to be the more diligent to instill every virtue in the minds of your *own children*, let generous *sympathy* touch your hearts; and join to wipe the tear from the *aged father’s* eye, to prevent the hoary head from going down to the grave in *sorrow*.” Many fathers indeed have cause to bless this charity, as the *happy means* of seeing their daughters restored to them.

As members of the *civil community*, Mr. Dodd also exhorts us to unite in this laudable undertaking; which through the zeal of *good men*, and the vigilance of *magistrates* may, in due season, in some degree, wash away that

nuisance of our times, *the pollution of our streets.*" And he adds, "surely, in every undertaking that has any *tendency* to remove such nuisance, if we really mean to preserve *our children, our servants, our dependants* of every kind, in innocence and virtue; if we wish to prevent *unspeakable distress*, and the most *cruel injury*, which the *virtuous* and *guiltless* have often found, from the *dire contagion of this promiscuous defilement*, we should join, in an undertaking of this nature, with hand and heart."

No one who pretends to pity, can be a careless spectator of so noble a part of the workmanship of heaven, treated with the *grossest indignity*, and *expiring* under circumstances the most *shocking* to humanity. There are *scenes* which would draw compassion even for the sufferings of a *brute animal*: and it is too well known, that many a *venerable head* is hurried to a grave by such accidents. This is the case with great numbers of *common prostitutes*; whilst the greatest part of those who are pampered in *private*, have seldom prudence to make any reserve for a retreat; and if they do not fall by an early death, they live but a *miserable life*. And as to those who infest the *streets*, they spread contagion through a *much greater* part of both the sexes, than is *generally imagined*; and many a *virtuous woman* has felt the dreadful effects of her *husband's* irregularities.

If we take in the whole scope and design of the *Magdalene* charity, it will be found productive of many *great* and *good* effects. I have seen a *great variety of misery* in various climes, and have been present at many *interesting scenes*,

scenes, but no incident of life has reached me, more affecting than the relief afforded by this charity to many *unhappy women*. To see the *tattered, filthy garments* of some, whose education first set them above the *lower class* of mankind, with the tears which seem to flow from *real contrition*: to hear the *story* of their wretchedness, and their entreaties for *admission*, if we may be allowed to judge from the conduct of many, *after the trial*, it ought to influence the heart of the *patriot*, the *philosopher*, and the *christian*.

Allowing for all the *artfulness* which cunning in *little souls* can practise, there is a native *ingenuoufness* in the mind of women far beyond what is generally imagined: this is demonstrated in the *gratitude* which those often express, who are supposed to be the most abandoned of their sex. Nor need you take my word for it, the *facts* themselves give the most convincing evidence. The *decent deportment*; the *industry*; the regular *private prayers*; the *constant attendance at the chapel*: the numbers placed out into *good services*; and above all the *reconciliations* of them to their *parents*, are circumstances which do honor to the *charity*, as a *christian* institution, as well as to *human nature*. You may rest assured of the *intrinsic* value of the design, and with the utmost propriety be as true an advocate, for the harlot who is become a *sober* and *industrious christian*, and a *real penitent*, as I have reason to be

Your real friend.

On occasion of an application to obtain a reconciliation between
a prostitute (not in the Magdalane house) and her relations.

LETTER X.

To ———

WHAT a picture do you give me of yourself! When you *think*, you find yourself *insupportably* wretched, and when you *do not think*, your moments of pleasure *vanish like a dream*. Were there no *heaven* nor *hell*, could you be in a *worse state*? There was a time when you used to read the *scriptures*: have you totally forgotten, that the prophet *Isaiah* has declared, as from *GOD* himself, that “*there is no peace for the wicked.*” It is so ordained by *heaven*; and you find it *experimentally true*. What *prospect* have you, but a little jollity, the *giddy flights* of a few frantic hours, with the *transient gratification* of the *pride* and *vanity* of your *deluded heart*, whilst every *earthly Being*, endowed with reason, your *own companions* not excepted, consider you as the *out-cast* of the human race, not worthy even of *pity*.

If you are not thoughtless to a degree of *stupidity*, you must conclude that the loss of your *beauty* will speedily ensue. *Pale disease* walks close at the heels of the *infernal* vice you practise, and *beauty* must wither as *vernal flowers* are nipt by *Eastern blasts*: and with beauty lost, there
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will be an *encrease of your misery*, whilst your life is drawing near to an *end*. But what, alas, is *beauty or life* in such hands as yours!—And do you believe that *nothing* will follow after death? Do you imagine, *with all your pride*, that you are really no *better than a dog*? You cannot think so; it is *impossible*! and yet if you *live like a dog*, you must expect to *die like one*, the *punishment* of your sins excepted. I am sure your *conscience* tells you that you are in the broad path of destruction: and this *monitor* is as clearly intended by nature, for the *preservation of your soul*, as *hunger*, when it calls on you to eat, is to preserve your *body*. You run the greatest hazard, every day, of poisoning your *body* with the venom of a *venereal disease*; and what shall I say of your *soul*; is it not already poisoned? Heaven grant it may not be *mortal*! What can be expected if you go on, but that *body* and *soul* will soon *perish* together.

Can you *think* of this, and not *tremble*; and can you *tremble* and not fly from the *danger*? It is true; you *weep*, you say you are *sorry* for what is past, and you entreat me to be your *friend*: be a *friend to yourself*; act like a *reasonable Being*, and I will be your *friend* and your *advocate* too. If you *prefer misery and destruction*, who can *plead your cause*? The very mention of you to your *brother* makes him start back as if he saw a *dreadful spectre*; at the same time that the remembrance of the *love* he once had for you, bursts his heart with *sorrow*. Do you wish to plunge a dagger into his breast, as I fear you have already done into your *mother's*? Do you desire to imbrue your hands in the blood

of your *greatest benefactors*? If you do, *go on*: be as *wicked* as you can; you may be *sure of succeeding*. It is true that he *sometimes* seems inclined to *hope*, that you have *too much sense* to pursue this *abominable* course of life; but then he immediately corrects himself, and says, “*She has deceived me so often, I cannot trust to her inconstancy. Her tears are as fantastic as her dress; and her protestations as fallacious, as her life is shocking to my imagination!*” And then he adds, “*Good God! is it possible that human nature should be sunk so low!*” Sunk it is indeed, in your person! and what danger are you in of sinking into *bottomless perdition*, to dwell, for ever, with the *devil* and his angels!

What can I say to all this?—Your *wavering discourse*, and the fluctuating sentiments contained in *your letter*, which I received yesterday, make me so much at a loss to know what your resolutions are, that I beg to be *excused* hearing more of you, till you are *determined*; and then I shall judge of your *sincerity* by the proofs you give me of it.

For my own part, I am *convinced* that there is a state of *rewards* and *punishments* after death, and that as we have lived *virtuously* or *viciously*, we shall be *happy* or *miserable* for ever. I reflect with *joy* on the one, and I tremble at the other. I consider life under its most *pleasing* circumstances, as a *very small object*, compared with *eternity*! But if you will pursue *future misery* and *present pain*: if you will *hear* those who mean to make a sacrifice of you for their own *iniquitous gain*, and *resolve* to drudge on in the *odious* labor of *prostitution*, and die as a victim at the altar

altar of *pollution*: if you are so *stupid* as not to see this, or so *perverse* as to prefer *hell* to *heaven*, go on:—what in the *name of mercy* can you expect I should do for you?

When I see you give proof of being a *christian*, in something more than *name*, it may be in my power to do you the *service* you desire. Consider this letter with *attention*, and be *assured* that I am so far from being reluctant to *interest* myself for you, that I *grieve* for your condition, and shall think myself *extremely happy* in giving you the truest demonstrations that I am

Your real friend.

Value of the soul. Duties required in the Magdalene house.

LETTER XI.

To — on her being admitted into the Magdalene house.

NOTHING could have *astonished* me more than that a young woman, educated as you have been, should have submitted to so *infamous* a course of life, had I not seen others, in as good a situation, do the same, who have not resolved to forsake it, as you have done. I congratulate you on the choice you have made. The course you was running, must have ended in *perdition*! You was already arrived at the *verge* of it: Look back at the *precipice*, and rejoice at your escape! Rejoice as if you had found a *treasure*! You certainly have found that which

may be of *infinite value* to you, if you improve it in a proper manner.

That there is a providence which governs the world, is visible from its effects ; and it is no less obvious to my apprehensions, that it depends on *ourselves*, by the *divine assistance*, to convert the *greatest misery* into the *greatest happiness*. *Without* faith in the word of God, there can be *no religion* ; and *with* it, you will soon discover that the mercy of that God is as *infinite* as his *justice* ; and that the *blood* of the great Prophet and Redeemer of the world was shed for you, as much as if you were the only human Being upon earth.

You are now resolved to *make proof of your own heart*, whether you are *sincere*. Do not amuse yourself with any *fond conceit* that there is any *wonder-working* power within the walls of the *Magdalene house* ; but remember that the *tree* is known by its *fruits*. To labor with *your hands*, to guard your *tongue*, to correct your *thoughts*, to learn *attention*, how to collect your *wandering thoughts*, and how to worship the God that made you, in *spirit* and in *truth*, is the *sum* and *substance* of the task which you have undertaken. *Look well to the performance of every part of it*. To fly from the *world*, is not flying from yourself : You have wisely determined to retreat, you have left your *evil companions*, and the *dangers* which surrounded you from their *influence* and *example*. You are also retired from the moral possibility of committing the sin for which you condemn yourself : *all this is well* ; you have *so far* obtained a *victory* ; but do not therefore imagine yourself free from
every

every kind of danger. Study your own *foibles*: a *bad temper* stands next in order to a *bad heart*. The truest proof of your *sincerity* and *good temper* will be seen in a *quiet, kind, obliging* behaviour, and by *patience*, where you think there is provocation to the contrary, if such should happen from the imprudence of any of your companions: there is no merit in avoiding *anger*, where *no provocation* is given; and remember that *pride* and *anger*, which generally wait on each other, are oftentimes the cause of womens going *astray*; and that without *humility* and *meekness* they cannot be restored again. It is often observed, that the *pride* of appearing above your rank and condition, joined to the *resentments* of some *real* or *supposed* injury, drives many *young women* headlong into *perdition*. If this is not your case, it has been of some of your companions, and *such passions are hard to be reduced*. Let me therefore entreat you to consider your own infirmities, and learn, not only how to be *compassionate*, but how to *correct* others, by your example. *Temperance* and *moderation* are acts of *justice*, particularly in your situation. *Humility, meekness* and *charity*, with an *entire resignation* of your *will* and *affections* to *God*, will lead you to the practice of those graces, which adorn the mind of a *christian*, and are the genuine marks by which a *true christian* is known.

If you are *in earnest*, as I trust you are, you may be sure of meeting all the countenance which the nature of the *charity* admits: the *gentlemen* who have taken it under their care, are *very much in earnest on their part*, and
it

it will give me great pleasure if I can be of any *service* to you. I send you a book entitled, *Thoughts on the Plan of the Magdalene Charity*; also a *Sermon*, which is more interesting, the last being written by the much-admired Mr. *Dodd*. You will be supplied with a *testament*, and a *common-prayer book*. For *God's sake* read them attentively: low as your condition is, your *soul* is of no less importance to you, than that of the *greatest monarch* upon earth to him, and both are of *equal value in the sight of God*. This you will be truly sensible of, when you sit down to read the scriptures, not as an *irksome task*, as you probably considered it at school, but as *the history of divine mercy, the great law of life, the instructor to avoid eternal misery, and the infallible guide to everlasting happiness*.

You may imagine that you know this already, but your *knowledge* never reached your *heart*, or you would not have gone such desperate lengths in wickedness. You *know* that the *Son of God* died for you, but how little attention have you shown to this *awful consideration*!—You *confess* that for some time past you dared not attend the *public worship*, lest it should be *mockery* for a person in your circumstances to supplicate for mercy.—*True* it is indeed; but, *good God*, how *dreadfully true*! What *ravage* does vice make in the soul! Think of the *dangers* you have escaped; and shun the most *distant approaches* of temptation for the future. Arm yourself at all points to resist it, whatever disguise it may put on. I trust in God you will act up to the *professions* you make, and I wish you success. I am, &c.

Tem-

Temperance, diet, health, and conformity to the rules.

LETTER XII.

To the same.

YOU who have known what it is to live in ease under the eye of an *indulgent* parent, having neglected that blessing, and forgotten your duty to the *God* that made you, ought in all reason to expect to *suffer*; but your *present sufferings*, compared with your *past guilt*, hardly deserve the name of *sufferings*. It is the great end of *christianity* to keep *reason* upon her throne, and reduce our *passions* and *appetites* to subjection, that mortifying our *sinful affections*, we may with the deepest *humility* receive the *great doctrine of the redemption of mankind*: but it is not possible that this can be done unless the mind is *prepared* for it. In order to this end, it is evident we must command the appetite of *hunger* and *thirst*, that the gratification of it may serve the purposes of supporting life, not the indulgence of it to destroy *life* or *health*. This holds equally strong with regard to the other appetite, I mean *lust*; the one relating merely to our *own preservation*, the other to the *continuance of the species*. That this last may not be, in the promiscuous manner of *beasts*, nor create *savageness, blood, and confusion*, as it probably would do; and for those weighty reasons, which respect an *after account*, we find that the

wife

wise author of nature has appointed the *conditions* of this gratification ; and all wise legislators, in obedience to the divine law, have made the *violation* of those conditions in some degree penal ; whilst *infamy, disgrace, disease,* or a total *perversion of will* are annexed to such violation. The government of this *appetite* seems to be most remarkably distinguished as one of the chief *criteria* to judge of *mens obedience to the divine laws* ; and above all, *christianity*, which most *dignifies* and exalts human nature, has most attentively guarded against the breach of this law.

Our *passions* and *appetites* depend much on our *senses*, and our senses depend very much on our *aliment*. She who with *simple plain diet*, without excess in *quantity*, might have continued *chaste*, supposing the temptations equal ; with another kind of diet may have become a *prey to incontinency*. You have often seen *drunkenness* and *lewdness* alternately follow each other : if the *mind* is deprived of *reason*, it is natural to suppose the *body* will lose its power of resistance of *moral evil* ; and be *subservient* to another's *appetite* even beyond what we see in *beasts*. And if the *consciousness* of past guilt disturbs the mind, we see many have recourse to the means of *extinguishing* reason, by the fumes of liquor, making the *remedy* worse than the *disease*. This plain reasoning is not sufficiently attended to, in common life, but the fact is so, and on this account *temperance* is recommended, and even enjoined by christianity, in a much greater degree than *christians practise*, or generally *acknowledge*.

Regard

Regard must be had to the *quality* of our food, of which *experience* is generally the best guide: and we frequently observe that there are some kinds, which being of an *indifferent* nature to *one* person, to *another* it is a crime to use them, as their effects are known to be pernicious: this is particularly demonstrated in the use of *spirituous liquors*: the same holds with regard to the *quantity* as to the *quality* of our food. It is remarked, that a *liquorish mouth* is often attended with a *lascivious disposition*. *Temperance* and *chastity* are almost synonymous terms, and so are *intemperance* and *impurity*, though they rather attend, or follow each other, than mean the same thing: at the same time *anger* cannot be more repugnant to christian *meekness*, than *intemperance* to christian *purity*. Were we to consider how sublime a virtue *temperance* is, and how certain the reward which accompanies it, were it only on account of the charms of *health*, we should be almost tempted to pay it *divine honors*. It is to *temperance* we owe *health*; and *health* is to the *body* what *virtue* is to the *soul*; whilst *disease*, like *sin*, binds the conqueror in chains, and makes the *monarch* often wish for death.

“ AUSPICIOUS HEALTH appear’d on Zephyr’s wings ;

“ She seem’d a cherub most divinely bright,

“ More soft than air, more gay than morning light.

“ Hail blooming goddess ! thou propitious pow’r,

“ Whose blessings mortals next to life implore ;

“ With

“ *With so much lustre your bright looks endear,*

“ *The cottages are courts when those appear.*

“ *Mankind, as you vouchsafe to smile or frown,*

“ *Find ease in chains, or anguish in a crown.*”

To point out to you the intimate connection of *virtue*, *happiness*, and *industry*, you may plainly perceive that health hardly depends more on *temperance*, than on *exercise*. In this respect the *poor*, being constrained to *labor*, are upon that very account frequently more *happy* than the *rich*. The *order of nature* must be observed without regard to the distinctions of *fortune*. “ Providence furnishes materials, but expects that we should work them up for ourselves. The earth must be *labored* before it gives its *increase*; and when it is forced into its several products, how many hands must they pass through before they are fit for use? *Manufactures*, *trade*, and *agriculture*, naturally employ more than *nineteen* parts of the species in *twenty*; and as for those who are not obliged to *labor*, by the condition in which they are born, they are more *miserable* than the rest of mankind, unless they indulge themselves in that voluntary labor which they call by the name of *exercise*.” Again, “ If *exercise* throws off all superfluities, *temperance* prevents them; if *exercise* clears the vessels, *temperance* neither satiates nor overstrains them; if *exercise* raises proper ferments in the humors, and promotes the circulation of the blood, *temperance* gives nature her *full play*, and enables her to exert herself in all her

her force and vigor ; if exercise dissipates a growing distemper, temperance starves it."

You may observe further among the most *sprightly* and *virtuous* part of both sexes, that nothing is so repugnant to their *temper* and *dispositions* as *idleness*, and nothing so contrary to the inclinations of the *vicious*, as *industry*. Idleness is a certain proof of a *vicious unworthy mind*, since it is obvious that if we do *nothing* for *ourselves*, nor for *any body* else, we can have *no right* to require any thing at their hands to be done for us : the consequence of which would be, that we should *die of hunger*. And hence you may learn how distant it is from the design of nature, that any should get their bread by so vile an employment as *prostitution*. *Temperance, health, industry, and virtue*, thus hang on each other, and are link'd by a chain, not to be separated, more than true *self-love* and *social virtue*, which appear to be one and the same object.

" *Health consists with temperance alone,*

" *And peace, O virtue ! peace is all thy own !* "

Those who understand how to live, know also that whatever administers to *health* administers to *pleasure*, and she who in pursuit of *pleasure* sacrifices her *health*, may be said to give herself up to *pain*, not *pleasure*. The last is the *sad case* of many a *harlot*, and indeed of all mankind who mistake their *end*, and hunt after *pleasure* instead of *happiness*, and pursue *enjoyments* not consistent with *virtue*.

You

You must be sensible that it would be equally absurd and impolitic to feed women, in your circumstances, with *delicate* fare ; but you have abundantly sufficient, and it is *good* of its kind *. Your bed has no *curtains*, but neither is it exposed to any wind that can offend you ; and you draw in so much the purer air whilst you sleep. It is not of *down*, but it is *soft* enough, and indeed so much the better for health ; and it is *large* enough for one person to sleep in.

Whilst I recommend to you a most *grateful* acceptance of such fare as the *house* affords, let me conjure you, as you mean to be a *guest* in it, that you pay a *cheerful* and *willing obedience* to the *rules* it requires. Farewel.

* There is an allowance of bread baked in the house, not so white, but much sweeter and purer than the common bakers supply. It is intended also to brew, and their small-beer is given out by *allowance*. They have butter, cheese, water gruel, milk porridge, *mutton*, *beef*, &c. in such portions as are sufficient, and it is remarkable that most of the women in the house grow fat with a diet so much more *regular*, as well as *simple*, than they have been accustomed to.

On prayer.

LETTER XIII.

To the same.

I Have given you my opinion upon some circumstances of the conduct necessary to be observed in your present situation: and I hope, if you have your own happiness at heart, *my labor* will not be lost.

To form a true judgment of ourselves, we should constantly attend to the motions of our own hearts, nor even in the intervals between sleeping and waking, should we leave ourselves *unguarded*. There is a *lurking spirit* within us, which is ever *watchful* of all opportunities, of diverting our thoughts from the true objects of our happiness; not only preventing our thinking of what we should think, but also suggesting *ideas* which we would wish to *banish far from us*. There is no method of encountering this *busy spirit* so well as by proper *words*, the repetition of which may turn the *current* of our *thoughts*. Let me therefore entreat you to learn such *prayers*, *ejaculations*, and *pious soliloquys*, as may be ready at your tongue's end, on every occasion. Happy would it be for mankind, if this simple rule were well observed: it would be as a *fortress* to the soul, and a preparation for its *defence* in all dangers. We must *learn* how to *think* as occasions arise; and we have no less authority than

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the Son of God himself, that we should also learn how to pray.

It is an essential part of the *discipline* of the house, that besides the *devotion of the chapel*, the superior of the ward should pray aloud, for a short time, to those under her care, just before they go to rest: and as sleep is an image of death, my advice is, that you always familiarize death to your mind when you retire to sleep. Ask your own heart if you are ready, if so it should please heaven; for whether it be sleeping or waking, in the night or day, in your full senses, or deprived of them; die you must, and no time is so proper to think of it attentively * as when we are about to sleep. If we are thus prepared to die, of consequence we cannot be surprized; and life under such circumstances will be always pleasing: so far from creating any gloominess of mind, every thing will be joyful; since even death itself will be robbed of all its arrows, and appear as a friend: you will relish every morsel you eat, and there will be no bitter mixture of fear in your cup. To know how prayer will operate on the mind, in this important instance, can only be discovered by the experiment: but we may be morally certain of the success if we try.

Tho' reason and experience give us sufficient evidence of our own present wretchedness and indigence, the consideration of the immortality of the soul seems to be the strongest motive to prayer. We cannot tell what infinite happiness or infinite misery include in them: all things are now limited and have

* See thoughts on death, vol. 1. page 124.

have an *end*, yet we know enough of *present happiness* to seek it at the hazard of *life*; and language fails in the expression of the present misery which we often *suffer*: and to believe in a *future* state, and yet divide the *present life* from it, is an *absurdity in terms*. Man in his best condition, without *hopes* beyond the *present moment*, is a *wretched mass of contradiction*, since it is a part of his very nature, to *think*; and to *hope* for some distant good. But it has been well observed, that if we never acknowledge the enjoyments and privileges which we have *received*, and *hold of God*, we in effect deny that we receive them from him; and if we do not *petition* him for a supply of our wants, we either *deny those wants*, or *his power* of helping us. “If,” says an ingenious author, “I should never pray to God, nor worship him, such a total omission would be equivalent to this assertion, *there is no God who governs the world, to be adored*. And if I neglect this duty generally, though not *always*, if it does not directly proclaim the *same absurdity*; yet it is a proof that I am *indifferent* about it: for certainly to worship God after this manner, is only to worship him *accidentally*; which is to declare it as an *accident* that he is worshipped at all; and this also approaches to a total neglect. Besides, such a sparing and *unfrequent worship of the deity* betrays such an *habitual disregard* of him, as must needs render every religious act *insignificant*, and of no effect.”

Nothing can be more apparent than the DUTY OF PRAYER to be offered up at stated times, *morning*

and evening ; and those who have a deep sense of *religion* will find it a very familiar task, if they send up a short prayer at *noon day*. Some have better opportunity for this than others, from their situation in life ; but every one may pause, for half a minute, without injury to the business of the world, or the imputation of *enthusiasm*.

To pray with the *understanding*, as well as the *tongue*, and the *heart*, constitutes the most *essential part of religion* : for how can we give any proof that our *wills* and *affections* are right with *God* ; or how can they be *right*, if we never refer ourselves to him, but in a mere *formal inanimate worship*, where the *body only* is concerned, and hardly that ? “ *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*”

Many persons who are not generally denominated *wicked*, are yet so *careless*, and so unaccustomed to pray in private, that they hardly think it an essential part of religion. But if there is any thing in the *life of man*, about which he ought to be *serious*, it must be in his addresses to the *God of life*, on whom his *present and everlasting happiness* depends. Whilst the whole hosts of heaven are singing *hallelujahs* to their great creator : whilst the *heavens* rejoice, and all animate nature smiles with *gladness*, shall man be *silent* ? Shall he content himself with an *indolent passive belief of a God*, and dependance on his *Providence* ; or make use of all proper opportunities, to shew the impression which this belief makes on his mind ? The integrity of our *words and actions* do indeed sanctify

sanctify our lives, and is an excellent preparative for prayer: if we *live well*, it is probable we shall *pray well*; but if we *pray ill*, or not at all, how will our *last long reckoning* stand? how will it be perplexed with *errors, omissions, and wilful faults*? If we do not account often with *our own hearts*, fairly and distinctly, how shall we appear at the bar of a judge, whose *wisdom and justice* are infinite, and who requires the improvement of our *talents*? And surely the noblest talent committed to us, is the *power*, of addressing our *supplications to the Almighty*!

“Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God,
 “and be more ready to hear than to give the sacrifice of
 “fools, for they consider not that they do evil.” The preacher immediately explains himself by adding, “Be not rash
 “with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any
 “thing before God, for God is in heaven, and thou upon
 “earth, therefore let thy words be few.” Never dare to kneel before your maker in a trifling manner. The admonition, “not to utter any thing,” must needs imply a direction to make a good choice of words, as well as sentiments, and not to trust to extemporary compositions, or words taken up hastily, on the spot.

There are very few persons qualified to pray without a form of prayer. From a fond opinion of praying with the spirit, they are apt to pray without understanding, or common sense. I once heard a *methodist* say, there was no occasion of any form of prayer, to those who had the new birth; and indeed it should seem in general that human nature must be changed before the common race of

mortals will be able to address their maker properly, without a *form of prayer*; and the Son of God himself has recommended a *form*. You will find in the *common liturgy* of our church the prayers are most admirably composed, and equally well adapted to *one* person, as to a congregation. It seems impossible to make prayers without figures drawn from sense; but when these are *scriptural*, and applied with *judgment*, without leaning too much to the *hyperbolical strain*, they are generally the most *esteemable*: and in this particular, there is a peculiar *dignity* and *simplicity* in our liturgy.

So far from *all forms being useless*, I apprehend that great assistance is to be drawn in *public prayer*, from keeping the eye generally fixed on the book: this will prevent its wandering to other objects; our recollection of what we are about, will be the stronger: it will check the *imagination*, and help to drive from our minds *ideas* of things foreign to our *prayers*. The book also helps us very much, to make the *responses* regularly. In public we are assisted by the *joint supplications* of others; whilst the *place* adds a sanctity to the deed, and the *incense* derives a peculiar favor, which must be the more acceptable at the throne of heaven.

If you mean to offer up your heart to God with sincerity, *meditate* a little, before you fall down before him, and rise up before you have *lost yourself in absence*. If after *saying* your prayers in *private* you are conscious that you forgot yourself, and only *said them, not prayed*; rouse your attention; rally the *powers* of your mind; return to your duty,

duty, and *discharge it well*, tho' it were but for *half a minute*. There are not many persons who can be attentive to *prayer*, for any *long time*; but a *habit of inattention*, in this instance, is *abominable*; it converts an *infirmity* into *wickedness*. You will find that *attention* depends on *habit*; also on *time* and *season*, that we be free from *interruption* or *intrusion* of any kind: it depends likewise, in some measure, on maturity of age, also on *temperance*, and something also on *health* and *constitution*; but above all, on a *good mind*.

Whether your prayers be *short* or *long*, if you are not *attentive* to them *yourself*, can you think that *God* will be *attentive* to them? Will they not be the *sacrifice of fools*, or the mere *breath* of your nostrils, in the sight of him who searches *the spirit*, and requires to be worshipped in *spirit* and in *truth*? but he knoweth whereof we are made, and does not require *long prayers*. Be therefore *deliberate*; let not your *tongue* out-run your *thoughts*, but attend to the *sense* of your words. For the same reason *moderate the warmth of your passions*: worship GOD with *fervent calmness*, for fervency and calmness are certainly consistent, but *transport* weakens, and sometimes destroys the *powers of the mind*, or substitutes *passion* in the place of *reason*.

Some are assisted in their devotion by repeating their words so *distinct*, that they can *hear themselves speak*: but they should be cautious not to disturb others, if they pray in company, or in a *congregation*.

There is a measure in all things ; you can hardly be too *attentive*, nor is it possible to be too *sincere* ; but we sometimes mistake the *warmth of our blood* for the *greatest piety of heart*.

Where the memory is defective, the use of a *book* is of great consequence, even in *private prayer* ; but *young persons* easily learn by heart whatever they set about. — If you should have occasion, at any time, to *pray aloud to others*, it is necessary to consider the *force of every expression*, and where to lay the proper *emphasis*. You may do more essential service to the hearts of your audience in a *minute*, than is frequently done in an *hour*. And it is as necessary to pray with a true cadence, as to the *sound of words*, as to *sing with a true harmony*. It is with *reading and praying*, as it is with *music* ; our ears are offended when there is *no harmony*. A right *understanding of our subject*, joined to *attention*, naturally lead to justness in the sound of words ; as justness in sound, leads to a true sense. You have often heard a *manner of expression* which creates *awe*, and fills the heart with the *piety of an angel* ; and another manner, which makes us apt to *forget* to whom we are addressing ourselves, if it does *no worse*.

It is no less obvious, that as we consist of *body and soul*, we must *glorify God in both*. Nor indeed ought we to enter the *house of God*, I mean for *public prayer*, with *bows and courtesies* to each other ; but with a mind imploring his *holy Spirit* to help our *infirmities*.

In *hearing the scriptures* read, or a *sermon* preached, apply them as closely to yourself, as if they related to *no other person*, and treasure up what is said in your *heart* and *memory*.

'Tis a great misfortune, I think, that in *our churches* more care is not taken about the *harmony* and *devotional* part of psalm singing, though in numerous instances it is of the utmost consequence, particularly with respect to a great part of the common people: let your *understanding* and your *heart* regulate the *music* of your voice, that your *spirit*, as well as *your tongue*, may rejoice.

In *receiving the sacrament* remember what you should at no time *forget*; but now particularly *call to mind* the *inexpressible love* of him whose life and death you *commemorate*; and with whom you enter into a new compact to obey his *precepts*. And if he loved us, even unto *death*, what ought to be the warmth of our *charity* to our fellow-creatures, on this occasion!

In *repeating your creed*, observe what it is you *profess to believe*; and occasionally study and contemplate every article of it, that you may always *act* as if you *believe*, what you declare so often in the *house of God*, and in the presence of your Maker, that you *do believe*.

Inclosed I send you a little book entitled, *Directions* for a devout and decent behaviour at church, which is simple, and well digested: also a TABLE pointing out the several subjects of the *church prayers* and the *psalms*. For want of these assistances I believe many have but *confused ideas* of the book they read, and out of which they
 pray,

pray, from their childhood to the grave, and often die without this *examination*, though it is obvious enough; and certainly this method enhances the value of the book very greatly. I also send you some *religious meditations*, which hardly deserve the name of *prayers*; likewise some *pritions to heaven*, the language of which being more *scriptural*, you may call them *prayers*, if you please, and use them as you may find *most proper*. We find so many good prayers, made to our hands, in the *common liturgy*, that we need be the less concerned about others, except for *particular occasions*, with which perhaps you are already provided. Let me entreat you to consider well the merit of our liturgy; and to study it in the manner the *table*, above mentioned, will enable you to do; and what is I suppose in this respect *right* for you, in the *Magdalene house*, I can hardly think to be less right for any person in any other house. Farewel.

DIRECTIONS

FOR A

Devout and Decent Behaviour

IN THE

PUBLIC WORSHIP of GOD*.

sent with Letter XIII.

“**T**HERE are too many call themselves christians, who come not to church at all, or very seldom, notwithstanding our religion, and the laws of our country, require of us to worship God in public. And even of those who do come, we find many behaving themselves in a careless manner, as if the worship of GOD were either not the business they came about, or not worth minding.—Some *sit* all the time of prayers, contrary to common decency; whilst others put themselves into such lazy and irreverent postures, as shew they have *no sense* of their duty; no awe on their minds; no reverence for the glorious Being they come to address. Some lay themselves *to sleep*, or trifle away the time in thinking of their worldly affairs. Others *gaze* and *stare* about upon the congregation, or keep *talking* and whispering with their
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* Sold by Mr. Dodd in Ave Mary Lane. The above is altered in some parts from the book sold.

neighbours. This is observable particularly whilst the *lessons* are reading; as if the holy scriptures, tho' given by *inspiration* of GOD, were not always to be *heard*, and *digested*, nor the end for which they were written, regarded, though designed to be *profitable for doctrine*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, and *instruction in righteousness*.

With respect to such cold and careless worshippers, we may apply to the church what *Jacob* said of *Bethel*; *Surely the Lord is in this place, and they know it not*. They do not *consider*, that they are in the immediate presence of GOD, and that by such a behaviour they affront him to *his face*, while they should be devoutly attending to his *word*, or *praying to him* with humble supplication.

Others there are, who shew some inclination to mind the prayers, and the rest of the service; but they do it with so much *ignorance*, *distractiō*, or *confusion*, as discover that they do not rightly understand the difference betwixt one part of the service and another; nor consider, that some are *prayers*, some *praises* and *thanksgivings*, some public *professions* of the christian faith, and some no more than *instructions*, *commands*, or *exhortations* to the people. We often find them repeating after the *minister*, what he *alone* should speak, and *they* should only *hearken* to. They are also apt, when they join in the prayers, to say them, after him, so *loud*, as must needs be troublesome, and disturb those that are near them.

Now that such well-disposed persons may be taught how to order their devotions better; and to worship GOD not only with the *spirit*, but with *understanding* also, the

following directions are earnestly recommended to their *consideration and practice*.

First then, have a conscientious regard to this *advice* of Solomon, (to whom GOD gave a *wise and understanding heart*;) *Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of GOD*; and so look to every step you take in your approach to it, that you come into his more *immediate* presence with such *contemplations, meditations, and reflections* in your mind; as will *lift up your soul unto him*, under an awful and just sense of his *divine majesty and perfections*; and with that *humble and contrite spirit*, which dependent creatures and *miserable sinners*, ought to have.

Remember, that as GOD is a *spirit*, your worship of him must be spiritual and reasonable, sincere and pure. It must flow from a divine and heavenly frame of mind. But as the *whole man* consists of *body and soul* together, you must *glorify him in both*; and, considering their natural union and *sympathy*, you must take such heed to every gesture and posture of your body, as that they may be such as will best express your humility, reverence, and earnestness, and keep up *suitable* thoughts and affections in your soul. Therefore you will conclude, that a *kneeling posture* is most proper; being that which *nature* seems to dictate, in *solemn adorations and humble confessions*, even without an express call for it, from the inspired Psalmist, who says, *O come, let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker*.

Secondly, If you are thus prepared to *worship GOD in spirit and in truth*, you will go early to his house, so as
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to be there at the very beginning of the service : since the same obligation lies upon you to attend every part of his public worship, as to come to church at all. If you miss the *beginning* of it, you lose the opportunity of *confessing your sins*, and the comfort of hearing your pardon declared and pronounced to you ; and by coming late, you *disturb* the congregation to make way for you. Take care also not to leave the church, without great necessity, nor till after the minister has given the *blessing* that concludes the whole service ; for if you go out before, you will show a *bad example* and seem to despise the *blessing* ; and if you do so, you cannot expect the *grace* and *peace* of GOD should go along with you.

Thirdly, Having a convenient opportunity, after your entrance into the church, *fall down* upon your knees in *private* prayer to GOD, for the assistance of his Spirit in those solemn duties of religion you come to perform, in some proper words, as, “ O Lord let thy *holy Spirit* help mine *infirmities*, and dispose my heart to the most sincere devotion, that I may improve this opportunity to the honor of thy name, and the benefit of my soul, for Jesus Christ his sake.” It is thus you will be led to consider him as observing what you *think*, as well as what you *say* and *do* ; and take care that the *inward* disposition of your *soul*, and the *outward* demeanor of your *body*, be such as becometh, not only the *holiness* and *worship* of his *house*, but also his more *immediate presence*.

When you *pray* fix your thoughts wholly upon GOD, who alone *heareth prayer* ; disengage your mind from all
worldly

worldly concerns ; keep your eyes from wandering, and your lips from disturbing others in their devotions.

In Thanksgiving,

Imprint upon your heart a just and lively sense of the goodness and loving kindness of God to yourself, and to all men ; you will then *feel how joyful and pleasant a thing it is, to be thankful.*

In hearing the Scripture.

Whether it be read or preached, be not only attentive to it, but inwardly digest it, by applying to your own conscience its *general admonitions, reproofs, or exhortations* ; and by treasuring up in your memory its *precepts and examples, its promises and threatnings*, for the constant and right ordering of your conversation.

In singing Psalms,

Let your *understanding and spirit* direct and govern the melody of your voice, that so your heart may be no less filled with *grace*, than your tongue with joy.

In receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper,

Remember always the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour in dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained to us. For you will then, at all times, draw near to receive it with faith, with a *penitent and obedient heart*, in love and charity with all mankind, and with a determined resolution to forsake those sins which brought him

him even to the death upon the cross ; which will likewise engage you to serve him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of your life.

But besides these *general* directions for the *public worship* of GOD, there are others which *particularly* concern a devout and proper use of the book of *common prayer* appointed by the *church of England* : and which will require your immediate attention to the nature, and the order of every part in that *service*.

The Sentences.

Now the first thing done by the minister, is to read some *sentences* out of the holy scriptures. Hearken diligently to these, and consider them as spoken at first by the *inspiration* or *command* of GOD himself, and now repeated by his *minister*, to put you in mind of something which HE would have you *believe* or *do*. For they are such sentences as not only bring our *sins* to our remembrance, but also HIS *promises of pardon and forgiveness*, if we do repent ; that so we may worship him with that *reverence* and *godly fear*, which becomes those who are sensible of their own *sinfulness* and *unworthiness* to approach his divine majesty ; and likewise with that faith and humble confidence which become those, who believe that upon their repentance he will pardon and accept them, according to those promises.

The Exhortation.

Then follows a solemn *exhortation*. Now while this is reading (which is the minister's part alone, and not to be repeated after him by the congregation) *take particular notice of every word and expression in it*, as contrived on purpose to prepare you for the *worship* of GOD, by possessing your mind with a due sense of his *special presence*, and of the great ends of your coming before him at this time; which will *compose* your thoughts for that part of the service which follows next; I mean, an humble *confession* of your sins.

The Confession.

But here, while you are *confessing* to GOD with your *mouth*, and repeating sentence by sentence after the minister, be sure to do the same *in your heart*; calling to mind, as many as you can, of those particular sins which you have been guilty of; either by *doing what you ought not to do*, or *not doing what you ought*; so as to be heartily sorry for them, and *stedfastly* to resolve against them for the time to come; imploring his *mercy* in the *pardon* of them, and his *grace*, that from thenceforward you may entirely forsake them, and bring forth the fruits of an unfeigned repentance.

The Absolution.

The *confession* ended, and you continuing upon your knees, the minister stands up, and in the name of GOD

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declares and pronounces *pardon* and *forgiveness* to all that *truly repent*, and *unfeignedly believe* his holy gospel. — But while the *absolution* is thus pronouncing, you are to hearken to it with perfect silence, not *reading* or *repeating* it along with the minister, as many ignorant or unthinking people do; for it is the minister's duty alone to make this declaration, by authority from GOD, and in his name, as his *ambassador*. However, every particular person present ought humbly and thankfully to apply it to himself, so far as to be fully persuaded in his own mind, that if, after an unfeigned and unshaken belief in *Christ*, he doth *really* and *heartily repent*, he will be *discharged* and *absolved* from all the sins he had before committed, as certainly as if GOD himself had declared it with his own mouth, since his *minister* has done it in *his name*, and by *his power*.

The Lord's Prayer.

What follows is the *Lord's Prayer*, in which the whole congregation joins: for looking upon ourselves as thus absolved from our sins, through a *faith* that worketh true repentance, we, as reconciled unto GOD through his Son, may have such *boldness* and *access* to the throne of divine grace, as by the Spirit of adoption to cry out, *Abba, Father*, in the very form he taught us to pray; saying, *Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.*

Preparation for praising GOD.

This done, we are to lift up our hearts to GOD in this petition of his *minister* for his *grace*; O Lord, open thou our lips; to which the answer is, what it ought to be, from the people, and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise. Thus the minister again, O God, make speed to save us; the people, O Lord, make haste to help us. Then immediately standing up, we put ourselves into a posture of giving praise to the one, living, and true GOD, the King of kings, the Lord of lords. For which purpose the minister first says, *Glory be to the Father, &c.* the people, to shew their consent, answer, *As it was in the beginning, &c.* The minister calling again upon the people, *Praise ye the Lord*; and the people answering, *The Lord's name be praised.*

The Psalms and Hymns.

We go on accordingly to praise him, by saying or singing the ninety-fifth *Psalms*; and then the *Psalms* appointed for the day. After every one of which we testify that it is the same divine Being, *three persons*, and ONE GOD, in whose honor these *Psalms* were composed, and made use of in the *Jewish* church, who is still praised and worshipped in the christian church, and accordingly we repeat that incomparable hymn, *Glory be to the Father, &c.*

Now while you, together with the minister, are repeating these *Psalms*, and this, or the other *Hymns*, that

are used in different places of the service to the honor and glory of GOD ; observe the *minister's part*, as well as *your own*, and lift up your heart, together with your voice, in *acknowledging*, *magnifying*, and *praising* the infinite *wisdom*, and *power*, and *goodness*, and *glory* of the most *High God* in all his works, the *wonders* that he has done, and still does for the children of men, and for yourself among the rest. And in doing this you *stand up* ; not only to *signify*, but to *forward* the lifting up of your mind at the same time. For as on the one hand, if our souls be already lifted up, to contemplate and praise GOD, our bodies will *naturally* rise in that erect posture, which is natural to, and most becometh man ; so on the other hand, the *raising up of our bodies* helps towards the *raising up of our souls*, by putting us in mind of that *high* and *heavenly* work we are about ; wherein, according to our weak capacities, we join with the *saints* and *angels* above in praising GOD *now*, as we hope to do *hereafter*, in their *blessed company for evermore*.

The Scriptures read.

When GOD's *word* is in reading, in either of the chapters, whether of the Old or New Testament, receive it not as the *word of men*, but as it is in truth, the word of GOD, *which effectually worketh in them that believe* : and therefore hearken to it with the same *attention*, *reverence*, and *faith*, as you would have done, if you had stood by mount *Sinai*, when GOD *proclaimed the law*,

law, or by our Saviour's side, when he published the gospel. But remember also, that you *hear* in order to *practise*; that you *be a doer of the word, not a hearer only, deceiving your ownself*. Observe in those parts of scripture that are read to you, what *sins* almighty GOD there warns you against; what *duties* he there requires you to perform; what *doctrines* he there teaches you; and be sure that when you go home, you *think* of them, and *live accordingly*.

Hymns after the Lessons and Creed.

As soon as the *first lesson* is read, and again after the *second*, we renew our devout praises to GOD in certain *hymns* appointed for that purpose. And then with one heart and voice we all repeat the *creed*, to signify and declare our assent to, and firm belief of the whole scriptures, but especially of the *gospel of Christ*.

Many ignorant people seem to take the *creed* to be a *prayer*, and repeat it as such; which is a very gross mistake. It is not a *prayer*, but only a *solemn acknowledgment* and profession of our faith, or what we believe as christians. And by repeating it here, we do, in the face of the congregation, profess ourselves to continue in the number of Christ's disciples: and that as we were at first baptized, so we still *believe* in the name of *the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, ONE GOD, blessed for ever! And this also we do *standing*, to signify our readiness to defend this faith to the utmost of our power, against all opposition

whatsoever. Be sure therefore, that you *really believe* every article as you pronounce it, that you be not found dissemblers and hypocrites in the sight of GOD: and when you stand up to repeat the *creed*, let it be your serious purpose to continue in that good profession, and to stand by it, and *hold it fast without wavering*, under all persecutions, if you should be called at any time to suffer for it.

The Prayers or Collects.

The next thing we do is to make known our wants, and present our petitions unto GOD. But seeing that neither *minister* nor *people* can possibly do it aright, without the *grace* and assistance of GOD himself; the minister first prays for his special presence with the people, saying, *The LORD be with YOU*; and they put up the same petition for the minister, answering him, *And with THY spirit*. Upon which they all immediately *adore* him, and beg for mercy from each person of the blessed Trinity, saying, *Lord, have mercy upon us! Christ, have mercy upon us! Lord, have mercy upon us!* And having again addressed ourselves to GOD in that most perfect form which Christ himself hath taught us, the *Lord's Prayer*, the minister and people by turns, lift up their hearts to GOD in some short and devout *ejaculations*; striving, as it were, to outvie each other, in prevailing with the Almighty to pour down his blessings upon us. Then in an humble and solemn manner we join together in

Joint

Joint Prayers or Collects,

Petitioning the divine majesty for his grace and favour, his defence and protection, his mercy and blessings, for *the king*, for the *royal family*, for the church, for ourselves, and for all mankind. This we ordinarily do in the *collects* appointed for that purpose; but upon *Wednesday*, *Friday*, and the *Lord's-day* morning, we do it in the *litany*; and in such a *litany* as comprehends all and every thing that we *need to desire of almighty GOD*, either for *ourselves or others*.

Reverence and Devotion.

While these prayers are reading, we ought devoutly to continue upon our knees; not sitting, or in any other slothful posture, as too many profanely and irreverently do. See therefore, that as you come to church to *pray to GOD*, you do it in that *awful, lowly, and solemn* manner which becomes creatures, when they speak to *their great and almighty Creator*. And although you ought not to repeat the prayers aloud, to the disturbance of other people, yet you must repeat them in a whisper, and in your heart; your mind accompanying the minister from one prayer to another, and from one part of each prayer to the other, all along, with attention to the sense of every word, and *affections* suitable to the matter; humbly *adoring and admiring GOD*, accord-

ing to the *names, properties, and works* which are attributed to him at the *beginning* of each prayer; *earnestly* desiring the good things which are asked of him, in the *body* of it, for yourselves or others; and *stedfastly* believing in the *merits* and *intercession* of *Jesus Christ* for your obtaining of them when he is named, as he always is at the end of every prayer, except that of *St. Chrysostom*, which is directed immediately to *Christ* himself. At the conclusion of every collect, you are also to testify your sincere joining in it, and your earnest desire of a share in the blessings prayed for, by a solemn *Amen*, which signifies *So be it*, or *Thus I heartily pray God it may be*.

Answers in the Litany.

In the *litany*, the assent is signified by the *answers* which the people are directed to make in their proper places, as, *Good Lord, deliver us!* that is, deliver us from those sins, or other evils, which the *minister* has just before mentioned. *We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord!* that is, to *grant* those blessings which the *minister* has just now recommended to our desires. By these we expressly, and more at large make the several petitions, recited before by the minister, our *own petitions and requests* to GOD.

The general Thanksgiving.

And having thus in the collects, or litany, prayed for all necessary blessings for ourselves and others, it is but fit

we should praise him also for those mercies we have already received ; and give thanks, not only in behalf of ourselves, but according to the apostle's direction, for *all mankind* ; which we do, towards the end of the service, in the *general thanksgiving*. Here, if you have any special or particular mercy to bless GOD for, upon your own account, gratefully remember it, and secretly in your heart return your praises for it, when you come to that passage, *Thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men*. But stir up yourself with fervency, when you praise him for his *inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory*. For as these are the *greatest blessings* he could bestow upon us, the thankful acknowledgment of them is one of the *chief ends* of our coming together thus in christian assemblies. Therefore not only heartily pray, but sincerely resolve and endeavour to shew your sense of these, as of all other mercies, by an holy and obedient life.

Concluding Prayer.

After this general thanksgiving, we have the prayer of *St. Chrysostom* ; and then the minister alone concludes with *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* In which prayer is comprehended all we have desired, or can desire, to make us completely happy both now and for ever. And with this our *common daily service* ends.

THE

THE COMMUNION SERVICE.

But upon *Sundays* and *holidays* we proceed to the *communion service*, to that part of it at least which our church enjoins to be used on such days, though there be no *actual communion*. Now in the prayers here, the same temper and devotion is to govern you, as in those before put up; the same reverence and attention when the *epistles* and *gospels* are read, as when the other scriptures (the *first* and *second lessons*) are in reading; the same faith, and holy zeal and courage, when the creeds are repeated.

The Commandments.

But what is most particular in the communion service is, that the *ten commandments* are solemnly read by the minister; and to express the greater authority, as pronouncing them in the name of GOD, he does it *standing*. The congregation in the mean time is to continue *kneeling*; not that the commandments are a *prayer*, as some weak people fancy them to be; nor need they be repeated after the *minister*, as many do, but because it is with a *peculiar reverence* that we ought to hear this *awful declaration* and *summary* of GOD's will, and of our duty, in the very words of GOD himself: and because that at the end of each commandment, our church has piously directed us to *beg the mercy* of GOD, in pardoning what we have been guilty of against the rule of that commandment, and his *grace* to keep it better for the future, in
these

these words, *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law*; which being a prayer, ought to be humbly offered upon our knees. Be very serious therefore when the *commandments are read*; and think, as the minister goes along, in every one of them, whether you have not offended GOD by thought, word, or deed, in something contrary to that commandment, (for in many things we all offend, as the apostle tells us.) And accordingly, when you join with the rest of the congregation, in that short prayer which follows each *commandment*, beg pardon of GOD with a deep and true repentance; and, whether your conscience accuse you or not, be serious and in earnest when you beg of GOD to *incline your heart to keep that article of his law, and to write the whole upon it more effectually.*

The Blessing at the end of the Communion Service.

This part of the service concludes with a *blessing*, (to be pronounced by the minister alone, and not to be repeated after him) which is in these words; *The peace of GOD, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of GOD, and of his Son Jesus Christ our LORD; and the blessing of GOD Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always.* Amen.

After the blessing, it may be fit to continue still for some time upon your knees, humbly beseeching almighty GOD to pardon what he has seen amiss in you, since you

came into his presence ; and *graciously* to hear the *prayers*, and to accept of the *praises*, which you have now offered up to him, through the merits of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate.

After the Service is ended.

Blessed be thy Name, O Lord, for this opportunity of attending thee in thy house and service.

Pardon my wanderings and imperfections, and accept me and my Services, through my only Mediator *Jesus Christ*. Amen."

AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE

Of the weekly collects in the book of Common-prayer, under their proper heads; also of the several subjects of the Psalms.

PRAYERS ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS.

- Affliction.* Collects for the 3d Sunday after Epiphany, 8th after Trinity, 15th in Lent.
- Angels.* Collect for St. Michael.
- Chastity.* Collect for the 1st Sunday in Lent.
- Christ.* The imitations of him. Collects for the next Sunday before Easter, and 2d after Easter.
- . . . Benefit of his death, Collect for the Annunciation.
- Church.* Collects for the 5th Sunday after Epiphany, 3d after Easter, St. John Evangelist, and the two first Collects for Good Friday.
- . . . Unity of it. Collect for St. Simon and St. Jude.
- . . . Peace of it. Collects for the 5th, 16th, and 22d Sundays after Trinity.
- Comfort.* Collect for the Sunday after the Ascension.
- Contrition.* Collect for Ash-Wednesday.
- Covetousness.* Collect for St. Matthew's day.
- Courage.* Collect for St. John Baptist.

Enemies.

Enemies. For deliverance from them. *Collect* for the 3d Sunday in Lent.

Example. That we may follow the example of Christ. *Collects* for the Sunday next before Easter, and the 2d after Easter Sunday.

Faith. *Collects* for Trinity Sunday, St. Thomas, St. Mark, and 14th Sunday after Trinity.

Grace. Grace and assistance in our christian course. *Collects* the 4th in Advent, 2d in Lent, Easter-day, 3d in Easter, 1st, 7th, and 13th after Trinity.

Heaven. For heavenly desires. *Collect* for Ascension-day. . . . For the enjoyment of GOD in heaven. *Collects* for Epiphany, 6th Sunday after Epiphany, and the Sunday after Ascension.

Humility. *Collect* for the Sunday before Easter.

Illumination, Or a right judgment in all things. *Collects* for Whitsunday, 1st Sunday after Epiphany, and 9th after Trinity.

Judgment. For deliverance from judgments. *Collects* for Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and the 4th Sunday in Lent.

Love. Love of God and his laws. *Collects* for the 4th Sunday after Easter, 6th, 7th, and 14th after Trinity.

. . . Love and charity. *Collect* for Quinquagesima Sunday.

Ministers. For fitness of ministers. *Collect* for St. Matthias.

Ministers.

Ministers. That they may be diligent. *Collect* for St. Peter's day.

That their labors may be successful. *Collect* for the 3d Sunday in *Advent*.

Mortification. *Collects* for the *Circumcision* and *Easter-eve*.

Obedience. That we may obey and follow the doctrine of the apostles. *Collects* for the *Conversion* of St. Paul, and St. John Baptist.

Prayer. For the acceptance of our prayers. *Collect* for the 10th Sunday after *Trinity*.

Providence. Prayers for protection by God's providence. *Collects* for the 2d, 3d, 4th and 20th Sundays after *Trinity*.

Purity. A prayer for purity of heart. *Collect* for the *Purification*.

Regeneration. A prayer for it. *Collect* for *Christmas-day*.

Religion. A prayer that we may be truly religious. *Collect* for the 7th Sunday after *Trinity*.

Saints. Prayers for the imitation of them. *Collect* for *Innocents-day*, St. Stephen, St. Philip, St. James, St. John Baptist, and *All Saints*.

Scripture. A prayer before reading the scripture. *Collect* for the 2d Sunday in *Advent*.

Sin. Prayers for conversion from sin. *Collects* for the 1st Sunday in *Advent*, the 1st after *Easter*, St. Andrew, St. James, and St. Matthew.

For pardon } *Collects* for the 12th, 21st and 24th Sundays
of Sin. } after *Trinity*.

Sincerity.

Sincerity. A prayer for it. *Collect* for the 3d Sunday after *Easter*.

Holy Spirit. Prayers for the direction of the Holy Spirit. *Collects* for the 19th Sunday after *Trinity*, and 5th after *Easter*.

Temptations. Prayers for deliverance from, and support under temptation. *Collects* for the 4th Sunday after *Epiphany*, and 2d in *Lent*.

Thoughts. A prayer against evil thoughts. *Collect* for the 5th Sunday after *Easter*.

Unbelievers. A prayer for *Jews*, *Turks*, *Infidels* and *Heretics*. The 3d *Collect* for *Good Friday*.

Good Works. Prayers for fruitfulness in good works. *Collects* for the 5th Sunday after *Easter*, and the 1st, 9th, 11th, 13th, 17th and 25th Sundays after *Trinity*.

A S H O R T A C C O U N T

Of the occasion and design of the Psalms of David, which may serve in the private use of that divine book, as an help to find out such Psalms, as may suit the general or particular circumstances of christians.

Most of the Psalms are prayers composed when David, or some other prophetic author was exposed to great danger or affliction; and therefore flies to God as his only help in time of need, implores his mercy, the pardon of sins, or deliverance from dangers and afflictions. Many are Psalms of thanksgiving for mercies received: some are designed to display the attributes and perfections of God, while others convey to us the most useful moral instructions. Lastly, some of the Psalms are prophetical, and some few historical.

P R A Y E R S.

I. Prayers for pardon of sin.

Psalms 6, 25, 38, 51, 130.

II. Prayers composed when the Psalmist was deprived of an opportunity of the public exercise of religion.

Psalms 42, 43, 63, 84.

III. Prayers wherein the Psalmist seems extremely dejected, though not totally deprived of consolation, under his afflictions.

Psalms 13, 22, 69, 77, 88, 143.

IV. Prayers wherein the Psalmist asketh help of God, in consideration of his own integrity, and the uprightness of his cause.

Psalms 7, 17, 26, 35.

V. Prayers expressing the firmest trust and confidence in God under afflictions.

Psalms 3, 16, 27, 31, 54, 56, 57, 61, 62, 71, 86.

VI. Prayers composed when the people of God were under affliction or persecution.

Psalms 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 89, 94, 102, 123, 137.

VII. Prayers in time of trouble and affliction.

Psalms 4, 5, 11, 28, 41, 55, 59, 64, 70, 109, 120, 140, 141, 142.

VIII. Prayers of intercession.

Psalms 26, 67, 122, 132, 144.

PSALMS OF THANKSGIVING.

I. Thanksgivings for mercies vouchsafed to particular persons.

Psalms 9, 18, 21, 30, 34, 40, 75, 103, 108, 116, 118, 138, 144.

II. Thanksgivings for mercies vouchsafed to the *Israelites* in general.

Psalms 46, 48, 65, 66, 68, 76, 81, 85, 98, 105, 124, 126, 129, 135, 136, 149.

PSALMS OF PRAISE AND ADORATION, DISPLAYING
THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

I. General acknowledgments of God's goodness and mercy, and particularly his care and protection of good men.

Psalms 23, 34, 36, 91, 100, 103, 107, 117, 121, 145, 146.

II. *Psalms* displaying the power, majesty, glory, and other attributes of the divine Being.

Psalms 8, 19, 24, 29, 33, 47, 50, 65, 66, 76, 77, 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 104, 111, 113, 114, 115, 134, 139, 147, 148, 150.

INSTRUCTIVE PSALMS.

I. The different characters of *good* and *bad* men. The *happiness* of the *one*, and the *miseries* of the *other*, are represented in

Psalms 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 24, 25, 32, 34, 36, 37, 50, 52, 53, 58, 73, 75, 84, 91, 92, 94, 112, 119, 121, 125, 127, 128, 133.

II. The excellence of God's law.

Psalms 19, 119.

III. The vanity of human life.

Psalms 39, 49, 90.

IV. Advice to magistrates.

Psalms 82, 101.

V. The virtue of humility.

Psalms 131.

PROPHETICAL PSALMS.

Psalms 2, 16, 22, 40, 45, 68, 72, 87, 110, 118.

HISTORICAL PSALMS.

Psalms 78, 105, 106.

DE-





DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS.

Under a consciousness of great offences.

O Lord, and tender Father of mankind, have compassion on me, according to the bowels of thy mercy! My conscience hath cried aloud against me; enter not into judgment with thy servant, but let thy goodness cover my confusion. Raise me up, O Lord, that I may no longer lie dead in sin; but grant that I may live, and living, rejoice in thy name! Let me not wander into strange paths, but seeing my folly and my weakness, I may gain wisdom and strength; and, by thy mighty grace assisting, become thy true and faithful servant!

^{2.}
The same.

O Lord, my Father, and my God! I have sinned before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy child. I wasted the heavenly substance which thou gavest me; O relieve me with the riches of thy mercy. Open mine eyes, that I may behold the paths of righteousness! Set my heart at liberty from the bondage of sin, that I may serve thee with a willing mind: and let the blood of my Redeemer purge away my offences!

3.

The same.

O Lord Almighty, I beseech thee let not thine anger burn against me. I have *sinned*! — I have *sinned* against thee, O Lord; but thou in thy mercy hast called me to *repentance*! Fill my heart with *gratitude* for this my *deliverance*! Immortal thanks be unto thee, O gracious Father, and mighty Lord of heaven and earth! Let the sense of these thy *mercies* keep me ever in thy *fear*, and under thy *protection*! Let my *life* be devoted to thee; that, if it is thy pleasure, I may rejoice to *die* for thy honor, that through the merits of thy dear Son I may inherit *life eternal*!

4.

The same.

Look down from thy triumphant glory, O Lord of heaven, and behold thy servant prostrate before thee! Look *comfortably* on me, and *cheer* my *mournful spirit*. Give me such *strength* and *humble confidence* in thee, that thy *mercies* may *shine* forth in me. My *neglect* of thy laws has rendered me an out-cast, even among the *children of the world*! O let my *obedience* obtain thy *forgiveness* for *Jesus Christ* his sake!

5.

The same.

O Lord, and mighty God of truth, I have sinned, and mine iniquities testify against me: but thou art the hope of
Israel,

Israel, and a Saviour in time of trouble ! O shew me thy mercy, for thy glories are wonderful ! Though my sins are more numerous than the hairs on my head, thou canst wash me clean. Be not a stranger to my soul, O Lord, nor shut up thy loving kindness from me. Turn thee again, and be gracious unto me ! O satisfy me with thy mercy, that I may rejoice in thy name ! Consider the years in which I have suffered adversity : and whilst my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and my spirit is afraid of thy judgments, O stablish me according to thy gracious promises in the gospel, that I may never be disappointed of my hope in Jesus Christ my Redeemer !

6.

The same.

O Lord Almighty, whose awful presence *patriarchs, prophets, and saints* were not able to approach : can I be *worthy* to lift up mine eyes to *heaven*, or present myself before the *majesty of thy throne* ! Thou art *pure and holy*, and wilt not justify a sinner in transgressions ! Suffer me not to be *swallowed up of death*, nor to become a *child of perdition* ! Thou art *my Father*, O GOD, and I am *thy child* : Thou art *my Creator*, and I am the *work of thy hands*. Remember *my weakness*, O LORD, as well as my *sins* ; and let thy *mercy* succor and preserve me. Heal my *broken conscience*, and let my *sins and ignorances* be done away. Endue me with thy Spirit, that I may *amend my life*, according to thy holy word ; and receive thy *pardon and peace* in *Jesus Christ my Redeemer*.

B.b 4

7.

7.

Against hardness of heart.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, who in compassion to thy peculiar people didst cause water to flow from stony rocks, let tears of contrition flow from my offending eyes, that with hearty repentance I may bewail my sins, and by true faith, obtain of thee perfect remission and forgiveness. I acknowledge the wickedness by which I have justly provoked thy wrath and indignation. O make the remembrance of it grievous unto me! Soften my obdurate heart, O Lord, that truly sensible of my offences, I may as truly serve and please thee in newness of life, through my only Saviour Jesus Christ!

8.

For resolution, sincerity and dependance on God.

O GRACIOUS FATHER of mankind, behold thy sinful creature! Without thee I can do nothing but sin: without thee I cannot sue for pardon. How often have I been sorry, and repented of my misdeeds; and how often have I again transgressed against thee? How shall I look up to heaven! O Lord of mercy, pour forth the abundance of thy mercies on my soul. Give me sincerity of heart, upright intentions, and a steady purpose of mind; that seeing my sins I may confess them; and confessing, be afraid and ashamed to offend thee any more! O give me a firm and vigorous resolution, that with steadfast faith I may behold the things which belong to my peace, before they are hid from

mine

mine eyes for ever ! Grant this, O Lord of heaven, thro' the infinite compassion of thy dear Son !

9.

For chastity, in the person of a great offender.

O blessed Jesus, look down from the glories of thy throne, and behold me who am the price of thy blood ! Thou camest down from heaven to redeem that which was *lost*, suffer not that to be *lost again* which thou hast once redeemed. — I have been the *temple* of thy Spirit, O God of Israel ! let not my *pollutions* destroy me, but *sanctify* me again to thy use. I am wearied with the *burden of my sins*, and my soul *thirsteth* after thee ; O refresh me with the *waters of life*, that I may *drink and live for ever* !

10.

For the same.

O thou everlasting God, who hast mercifully delivered me from the dominion of the *prince of darkness*, I now stand before thy throne a *monument* of thy compassion ! Whom have I in *heaven* but thee, and what is there on *earth* to be compared to thy *favor and protection* ! Let not the *foolish vanity of attire*, nor all the *gaudy trappings of splendid infamy* entice me into sin. Let no fond conceit of *personal charms* delude me, nor the soft blandishments of life, estrange my soul from thee. *Enlighten* my understanding ; *improve* my reason ; and *strengthen* my faith ; that *nothing* may appear desirable in comparison of a *pure heart*,

heart, and a peaceful conscience. Thou, O Lord, art my peace : thou art my only rest ! in thee alone is pleasure and true satisfaction, and all without thee is delusion, misery, and torment !

II.

For the same.

Give me, O Lord, I beseech thee, such a blessed habit of mind, that whether secluded from a world of temptation, or guarded from every approach of sin, I may obey thy laws, adore thy mercies, and magnify thy glorious name ! Grant me, O gracious Lord, so to subdue my spirit, to thy easy yoke, that I may offer up my prayers and praises to thee, with a pure, an humble, and a contrite heart ; and finally be received into thy glory, through the mediation of my only Saviour and Redeemer.

12.

For the same.

O Lord of heaven, whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity, have mercy on thy sinful creature, who offereth up her prayers unto thee ! Chastise my imagination, and curb my wandering thoughts ; let not beauty deceive me, nor lust pervert my heart ; nor any temptation turn mine eyes from heaven. Purify my corrupt affections, and renew a right spirit within me. Wash me thoroughly from my sins, and remove the stains of my foul offences, and let my body become a fit habitation of my immortal soul !

Guard

Guard every *avenue* to my heart, and give me strength to drive all wicked thoughts far from me ; that *religion* may become my *delight*, and *obedience* to thy *laws*, my *comfort* ! Send me thy *helping grace*, O *God*, for the *fake* of the spotless soul of thy beloved Son, that no *bad example* may shake my purpose ; no *wiles* of Satan *ensnare* ; no *foolish fancy* delude me into *sin* ! but so *guide* my steps, and arm me with resolution, that I may *die*, rather than *offend* thee, O *thou tender father of mankind* !

13.

For the same.

Thou who wouldst not, O *merciful Lord*, that any of thy creatures should perish, forgive my rank offences ! With horror and confusion I look back on the *abominations* of my past life !—How have I wandered from thy paths, and involved *others* in sin ! My *shamelessness* hath rendered me as a *dog* ; and I have been accounted as *spittle*. Instead of being a tower against death to a *virtuous man*, I have been the contempt of the *vicious* ! Even they who have been partakers in mine *iniquities*, have spurned at me ! —How have I *departed* from that *grace* and *dignity* with which thou hast distinguished those who obey thy commandments !—Return, O *mighty Lord of hosts*, return and drive mine *enemies* far from me. Be *merciful* to my sins ! —Wipe out my misdeeds, and restore my *innocency* !

14.

For the same.

O Lord, and merciful Father, who stoppeth not thine ears at the cries of the *wretched*, hear the supplications which I make before thee! Give me an humble and a contrite spirit, that I may entertain no *evil thought*, nor dare to utter an *indecent expression*. I shudder at the prospect of my *past* life, O let me fly from every *temptation* which may expose me for the *future*. Remove far from me all *subtleness of heart* and *contempt of thy word and commandments*. The practices of deceit have returned into mine own bosom, and as it were by a dart stricken through my liver, I became a victim to sin and Satan! Rescue me, O Lord, from the hands of mine enemies, that my ways may no longer lead me into the *chambers of death*, nor my heart decline into the paths of perdition!

15.

For the same.

O Eternal God, in whose sight nothing *impure* can stand, let my social affections burn with a *pure and lambent* flame, but suffer not the blaze of lust to *confound* me. Let not my *sincerity* beguile, nor my *tendernefs* pollute my heart. Give me a *steady mind*, O Lord! and whatever my distress, or poverty shall be, remove from me every temptation which may involve my soul in sin: and give me resolution to scorn *that relief* which is the

wages

wages of iniquity, and the price of perdition ! What, O Lord, can I receive in exchange for my soul ! Let not the customs of the world weaken my abhorrence of sin. Thou, O Lord, art the God of truth ! O let me remember the judgments which thou hast denounced against such offences, that I may implore thy forgiveness, and revere thy laws, through the intercession of my blessed Redeemer !

16.

For the same.

O most holy and merciful Lord, I have sinned against thee, in that I have not resisted my irregular desires. My affections have wandered, and my heart hath strayed from thee : O give me thy grace to return, that my resolutions may be fulfilled, and mine iniquities be no more remembered ! Purify my spirit, and banish from it all foolish and wicked suggestions, that the evils which I have committed may be done away, and my soul cleansed, through the blood of my blessed Saviour. Grant me that help which thou art more ready to give than I to ask, and have mercy on my sins for Jesus Christ his sake !

17.

For meekness and purity of heart.

O Father Almighty, and God of my life, I beseech thee humble my soul in thy presence ! Give me not a proud look,

3

and

and turn away from me a *haughty mind* ! Let no *vain hopes deceive*, nor *evil desires pervert my heart*. Leave me not to the *councils of sinners*, and let me not fall into *their snares*. Set a *scourge over my thoughts*, O Lord, that the *discipline of wisdom* may rule my heart, and *meekness of spirit* give rest unto my soul. Pardon mine *ignorances and infirmities*. Let a habit of *temperance* restrain my appetites, that neither the *greediness of the belly*, nor the *lust of the flesh*, may prevail against me ; and give me not over unto an *impudent mind* ; but teach me to serve thee for ever in *true faithfulness*, through *Jesus Christ* my Redeemer !

18.

On faith.

O Lord almighty, who of thine *infinite love* hast sent *thine only Son* to make thy *will* known unto men ; whilst thy *gospel* shineth on the earth, I beseech thee let me not *foolishly stray*, nor *blindly wander in darkness* ! Suffer me not to walk in the paths of the *world*, whilst the *footsteps of him who overcame the world*, are before mine eyes ; — even the *example of my blessed Redeemer* ! Suffer not the *customs or opinions* of men to over-rule my *reason* ; but make it my *daily task*, to read and consider thy holy scriptures, which have brought such joyful tidings to mankind. Chasten me, O Lord, that I may collect my *dissipated thoughts*, subdue my *evil habits*, and with a *steady mind* look forward to *eternity*.

19.

19.

On the same.

O Lord God almighty, in whose favor is life, and everlasting felicity! Thou hast graciously delivered me from the paths of ignorance, and from the ways of perdition: enlighten my understanding, that I may search with diligence, hear and digest with faith, and meditate with joy: and with patience and comfort hold fast thy sacred word, even with my latest breath. — And as I learn thy will, O God, let my anxious longing wishes, to serve thee with a pure and willing mind, render my heart an offering acceptable in thy sight! This I beg, O father of mercies, for the sake of that great priest and prophet who brought life and immortality to light!

20.

On occasion of attendance on the Sacrament.

Open my heart, O Lord of heaven, that I may receive thy word with the truest faith, and most devout affection! Pardon and forgive the distractions of my thoughts, and let my sincerity atone for the imperfect performance of my religious duties. Teach me to fly with joy into thy presence, and to supplicate thy mercies with ardent love! And when I commemorate the sufferings of my CRUCI-

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FIED LORD, as *bread* and *wine* nourish my *body*, let the *consecrated elements* invigorate my *soul*, that receiving thy creatures according to the institution of my *blessed Savior*, I may call to remembrance his *meritorious death* and *passion*, and become a partaker of the reward which he hath promised to his *faithful servants* !

21.

For the same.

O LORD GOD ETERNAL, who hast ordained, that *honor*, *thanks*, and *adoration* shall be paid to thee ; imprint on my mind a just sense of the necessity of receiving thy *holy communion* : let no *foolish opinion* that it may be dispensed with, divert me from so *essential a duty*. As the support of my *animal life* depends on *food*, let the supply of thy *grace* be also *life* and *strength* to my *spirit*. Let *fervent prayer* and *awful meditation* give me so *stedfast a confidence* in thee, O God, that I may always rejoice even when the *terrors of death* shall surround me ! Let the commemoration of this *propitiatory sacrifice* be a pledge of that affinity, by which I hope to be received under the shadow of thy almighty protection in the regions of immortal bliss !

On the same, (on occasion of receiving the Sacrament.)

O Lord, consider my complaint, and be not angry with thy servant that humbly begs to approach thy throne. Give me thy grace, for I am thine; and deliver me not into the hands of my ghastly enemies. Receive me as a returning prodigal, and give me the bread of life, to relieve my famished soul, that I may live for ever! How abominable are the sins which I have committed! How unutterable thy goodness in bringing me to thine altar! Hear me, O Lord, that I may magnify the wonders of thy mercies and long-suffering. Shew forth thy kindness, and accept the offering of my heart!

For Trust in God.

O Lord my God, in thee have I put my trust. Give me favor with them that know the sincerity of my heart, Thou that art the righteous judge of men, let me never provoke thine anger by any distrust of thy goodness. Let thy righteous sentence come forth from thy presence, and thine eyes behold my condition. I have called upon thee, O God! incline thine ear unto me, and hearken unto my words: deliver my soul from the ungodly, and from those who have their portion in this life. Show me thy paths that I may walk innocently. Examine me, O Lord, and

prove me, try out my reins and my heart; for thy loving kindness is ever before mine eyes, and I will delight in thy truth!

24.

For the same.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, I beseech thee give me thy grace; that I may wash my hands in innocency, and tell of all thy *wonderous* works. Let the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth, be my chief delight. Be merciful unto me, that I may rejoice in thy *salvation*! Let not the world reward me *evil* for *good*, nor the *unrighteous* triumph over me, but *comfort* thou my soul and *preserve* me!

25.

For the same.

O LORD ETERNAL, thou art my *defender*, my *worship*, and the *lifter up* of my head. When I call upon thee, O Lord, hear me out of thy holy hill; and when I lay me down to sleep, let thy mercy sustain me. Unto thee alone belongeth *salvation*; and thy blessing is upon those who praise thy name. Make my delight to be in the company of *righteous persons*, and with such as *excel in virtue*: and let me set THEE always before mine eyes, that I may *never fall*. My heart is glad, my glory rejoiceth, and my *flesh* shall rest in *hope*; for thou hast shewn me
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the *path of life*. In thy presence, O Lord, is the *fulness of joy*, and at thy right hand there is *pleasure for evermore*!

26.

For the same.

ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL GOD, my *light* and my *salvation*, thou art the strength of my life, O lead me to the habitation of thy righteousness, that finally I may behold thy beauty. Harken unto my voice when I cry unto thee: have mercy upon me, and hide not thy face from thy servant. Thou hast been ever my succour, forsake me not, O God of my *salvation*! If the whole world should forsake me, let me not *faint*, but *hope* to see thy *goodness* in the land of the living! What is the highest earthly splendor to be accounted of, if I can reach *thy glory* in thy heaven of heavens!

27.

For the same.

IN THEE, O LORD do I put my *trust*; let me never be put to *confusion*. Bow down thine ear to me, and be my *strong rock*, and my *house of defence*. Guide, me and lead me, O Lord of mercy! Into *thy hands* I commend my spirit, for thou hast *redeemed* me, O LORD, THOU GOD OF TRUTH! I will rejoice in thy mercy, for thou hast considered my trouble, and known my soul in adversity, when my life was waxed old with heaviness, and my

years with mourning. O shew me the light of thy countenance, and how plentiful thy *goodness* is, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, and *prepared* for them that *put their trust in THEE*, and not in the *sons of men*. O *stablish my heart that I may ever trust in thy mercy!*

28.

On Thanksgiving.

Hear me, O Lord, in the day of trouble : O God of Jacob defend me ! Remember all my offerings, and accept the sacrifice of my heart. Grant me my *soul's desire* : and fill up the measure of my *hopes* in thee. I will rejoice in thy *salvation*, and *triumph* in thy name ! Save, Lord, and hear me, O king of heaven, when I call upon thee ! Be merciful unto me, and shew me the light of thy countenance, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy *saving health* among all nations. Let the whole earth rejoice, for thou wilt judge it in *righteousness* ! Let her bring forth her *increase*, for thou, O Lord, art blessed for ever ; and let all the ends of the world fear thy name !

29.

For the same.

I will magnify thee, O GOD, MY KING, and I will praise thy name for ever and ever ! Every day will I give thanks unto thee, and praise thy name for ever and ever ! Great art thou, O LORD, and marvellous, worthy to be praised ;
there

there is no end of thy greatness ! One generation shall praise thy works unto another, and declare thy power ! And let me talk of thy worship, thy glory, thy praise, and wonderful works, that men may speak of the might of thy marvellous acts, and tell of thy greatness ! Thou art loving unto every man, and thy mercy is over all thy works. Let all nature praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints give thanks unto thee. For thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages. Thy power, thy glory, and thy mightiness, are known unto men : for when thou openest thine hand thou fillest all things living with plenteousness !

30.

For the same.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee, O LORD MOST HIGH, and my songs will I make in thy name. For thou hast maintained my *right* and my *cause* ; thou sittest in the *throne*, and judgest right ! Thou wilt judge the world, O LORD, and minister *righteousness*. O defend the *oppressed*, and be a refuge to the *distressed soul*, that they which know thy name may put their trust in thee, who *never* failest them that seek thee !

31.

For the same.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, who delightest in the happiness of thy creatures, accept the humble tribute of my thanks for thy unbounded mercies in the *redemption* of

mankind! *Thy glory, O LORD, is above the heavens!* In what *exalted* strains shall I pour out my heart, for all thy mercies to me a *miserable* sinner! O let the remembrance of thy favor, *elevate my spirit*, and thy loving kindness enliven my heart, as the morning dews refresh the earth!

32.

For the same.

Praised and magnified be thy name, *O God*, for ever and ever! With the deepest humility of soul I cast up my *longing eyes* towards thy mercy-seat; and prostrate myself in the contemplation of thy adorable perfections! *Lord*, what can that language be, which can express thy *praise*? Thou art *God from everlasting*! Millions of ages are but as a *moment in thy sight*; and I am but *dust and ashes*.—But thou hast given me *life*, and *thought*, and *powers*, to *worship thee*; and I will worship thee with my whole heart! Thou hast given me *voice to sing*, O let me chant *hallelujahs* to thy praise, and worship before thee *for ever and ever*!

33.

For the same.

O Lord God almighty, Father of angels and men, whose glory is far beyond the reach of *mortal eyes*, I beseech thee *exercise my heart in the sincerest love of truth*! *Cherish my reason*, and *strengthen my faith*, that I may trace out some of thy *perfections*, and adore thee in the *operations*

rations of thy hands ! — How wonderful are all thy works, O Lord of heaven ! — Let the regular return of day and night, summer and winter, teach me to worship thy supreme, almighty power ! — whilst the contemplation of the beautiful face of the earth, and the more glorious luminaries of the heavens, bring thee still closer to my soul ; and when I look up to heaven, let my heart be filled with gladness !

34.

For the same.

O most gracious God, whose full perfections are past finding out, teach me to adore thy attributes ; let my faith in them take such deep root in my heart, as never to be shaken by time or accidents ! Let my awe of thy eternal justice, and my repose in thy loving kindness and mercy, daily increase, till my obedience to the precepts of thy holy religion becomes pure and unspotted. And whilst I press forward in my duty, still let the consciousness of my frailness, humble my soul before thee, even to the dust of the earth ! Still let me fly for mercy, where only it can be found : still direct my steps to the cross of my bleeding Saviour, there to implore forgiveness through his intercession and mediation, at thy throne !

35.

For a good life in general (for the morning.)

O ALMIGHTY GOD, the great Creator and sovereign Lord of angels and men ! Father of light, who dwellest in

the light which no man can approach, accept my tribute of praise for all thy mercies; for giving me life and all things that pertain unto it: for preserving me from accidents this night past, and giving me refreshing sleep. But above all I praise thee, O Lord, from the inmost recesses of my soul, that instead of leaving me in *darkness*, and the *shadow of death*, thou hast given me a lively hope in the death and resurrection of *Jesus Christ*. Accept my thanks, O Lord, for the frequent opportunities afforded me, to fit and *prepare* my soul for *the great day of account*. Notwithstanding my abuse of thy *patience*, thou hast still given me *this day* to work out my salvation, O let me do it with *fear* and *trembling*! For these signal favors, for thy exceeding great and precious promises, thy praise shall ever be in my mouth. I will be *glad* and *rejoice* in thee, and my songs shall be made to thy praise. Unworthy as I am of thy favor, yet filled with the sense of thy goodness and forbearance, I am *resolved* to live no longer to *myself*, but to *him who redeemed me by his blood*! I will endeavor to conquer my sin, and particularly *that* which doth so easily beset me, and run with patience the race that is set before me. But I am not *sufficient* of myself for these things, or even to *think* any thing that is good. Without thee I can do nothing! My sufficiency standeth in thy name, O Lord, who hast made heaven and earth. O strengthen me with might by thy *holy Spirit*, to subdue my evil and corrupt inclinations; that *denying* myself, I may proceed chearfully in the paths of virtue and religion.

For the same (at any time.)

Preserve, O LORD, my *going out* and my *coming in*, and let thy *blessing* accompany me in whatever I take in hand. Give me grace to keep my tongue from evil, and my lips that they speak no guile; and to practise *bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering*, forgiving the offences of others. And may the awful consideration of the great and terrible day, when thou wilt judge the secrets of men, by *Jesus Christ*, influence my thoughts, words, and actions, that I may always take heed to my ways, and be accounted worthy to stand before the *son of man*; and to receive that great reward which he will bestow on them that diligently seek him. And may the *ravishing* thoughts of that *boundless happiness*, reserved in heaven for the *just*, induce me to set my *affections on things above*, and not on *things on the earth*: that I may be at once *encouraged* and *enabled* to bear with *patience* and *resignation* all those *crosses, disappointments, and misfortunes*, which are the inseparable companion of this present life: remembering always that I am in thy hand, O God. And let me rejoice that this *light affliction*, which is but for a *moment*, worketh for me a *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; and that after *patient continuance* in well doing, I shall receive *glory, and honor, and immortality*, and drink of thy *pleasures as out of a river*. — Thou knowest

knowest best my condition, my desires, and my real wants. Thine infinite wisdom knoweth, whether it be best for me to *abound*, or to *suffer need* : O do thou, *inexhaustible fountain of mercy*, suit thy blessings to my several necessities, leading me with thy *council* in order to receive me into thy glory !

37.

For the morning.

O merciful God, the mighty guardian and protector of mankind, who hast safely brought me to the beginning of this day ; continue thy favor to me ! Ponder my words, O Lord, and consider my meditation !—I am going into a world surrounded by snares, and beset with temptations : let my remembrance of thy wonders of old, and the mercies which thou hast shewn to me, keep my gratitude in all its vigor ; and the hopes of thy future favor add strength to my vigilance and care. Guard my heart, and keep the door of my lips, that I may never trespass on thy righteous laws !

38.

For the same.

O Lord of mercy, behold thy servant who is risen from the death of sleep !—I offer up the tribute of my humble thanks for this, and all thy mercies vouchsafed unto me. Defend me, O God, from all the perils to which I am exposed ! Inspire me with firm resolutions of obedience to thy commandments, that I may never lose sight of the bright example of my blessed Saviour ! Let it be my
hourly

hourly joy to discharge every duty with a strict attention to thy *holy word*; that presenting myself constantly before thee, *my whole life* may become as *one continued prayer*! Give me so *true* a knowledge of my *dependance* on thee, that I may *accept*, with an *humble and a contrite spirit*, whatever THOU shalt think *needful for me*!

39.

In sickness.

O Lord God omnipotent, who fillest immensity with thy presence, and sendest thy *ministering spirits* to relieve the *distresses* of thy creatures! *Favorably, with mercy, hear my supplications*! Thus languishing on the bed of sickness, o'erwhelm'd with fear and trouble, I fly to thee! O Lord, forgive my past offences; and suffer not the *pains of my body to distract my mind*, or weaken my *faith* in thee. Let me look back, with joy, at thy wondrous goodness, for all the *dreadful snares of sin* which I have escaped; whilst *I tremble*, with the anguish of a *bleeding heart*, at the numberless offences which I have committed against thee. Thou knowest whereof I am made, and the *evils to which I have been exposed*. O be merciful unto me; *strengthen my heart, and teach me how to die*: that to my *last expiring breath* I may repose my *trust* in thy mercy, through *Jesus Christ my Redeemer*!

40.

In the same.

O Father of mercy, and God of my life, send me thy *saving health*, that whether I *live or die*, I may not be
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entangled in the world, nor my soul estranged from thee ! I am enfeebled by sickness, and distracted with pain ; rouse my drooping spirits, O Lord ! Expand my heart, and enlarge my views, that I may look forward, with joy, on the vast prospect of eternity that lies before me ! Had I a thousand years to live, my prayers and praises should fill up every hour ! but if my time is come ; if it is now thy pleasure to break these chains of mortality ;—O receive me into the everlasting mansions of thy bliss ; there, with more exalted powers of soul, let me sing hallelujahs to thy praise, for ever and ever ! —I am not worthy, O Lord, of the least of thy mercies ! I am not worthy to cast up mine eyes to heaven ! O let the inestimable merits of my blessed Redeemer plead for my soul ! Let his all-powerful intercession prevail for me ; that through him I may find acceptance with thee ! Save me, O Lord, for thy mercies are infinite !


41.

In the same.

O Lord almighty, thou tender parent of all the children of men, extend thy compassion to me ! Thus drooping in sickness, and languishing in disease, touched with a deep sense of my past sins, and present misery, with the profoundest awe I humble my soul before thee ! O prepare my spirit for that approaching hour, when I shall appear at thy judgment-seat ! — There let the wounds of my bleeding Saviour plead my cause ! There let his powerful mediation sue for my pardon ! There let HIS inter-
cession

cannot compensate for MY imperfect service ! Blot out from thy remembrance the *numberless* transgressions of my life ; and let me devote the remainder of it, to adore, and praise, and magnify thy glorious name, through the same Jesus Christ, the mighty Saviour and Redeemer of the world !

42.

In the same. 

O Almighty and omniscient God, who considerest that we are but men, have mercy upon me, and send me thy comfort from above ! Let the *humble offering* of these tears, the only sacrifice I now can make, be still accepted by thee. O hear my prayers, and withhold not thy peace from my *anxious heart* ! Let not the sorrows of DEATH compass me about, nor do I implore thee to arrest his arm ; for thou knowest which of the two is best for me, or life or death ; and let thy will be done ! If my hour is come, in which this vital heat and motion is to cease ; to thy hands I commend my spirit, for THOU hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of mercy ! O blessed Jesus, who art the resurrection and the life, be THOU my defence in death ! Guard me against all the adversaries of my soul ! Let the remembrance of thy agonies and bloody sweat, and those sufferings, which no human heart can measure or conceive, give me patience and resignation ; that I may keep thy bright example in my view, and glory even in death !—Compose my thoughts, O Lord, and let my spirit rest in steadfast hope, that I may never be confounded !

43.

43.

In the same.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, who art a strong tower to all them that put their trust in thee, to whom all things in *heaven and earth* do bow, be thou my *defence on this verge of life* ! I know there is none other name under heaven, by which I can receive health or salvation, give me then a heart, O Lord, to fly to thee, in the name of my blessed Redeemer !

44.

In the same.

O GRACIOUS LORD OF HEAVEN, I beseech thee, as I feel my *bodily strength* decay, my *hope* in thee may *spring forth and flourish* with redoubled force ; and thy *grace* and *holy Spirit* invigorate my *soul* ! Give me an *unfeigned repentance* for all the errors of my past life, and a *stedfast faith* in *Jesus Christ* thy Son ; that my sins may be done away, by thy *mercy*, and my *pardon sealed in heaven*. And as my dissolution seemeth to draw near, O *fit and prepare* me for the dread hour, that *I may die in peace*, and my *soul* be received into thine everlasting kingdom, through the merits and mediation of the great Intercessor and Redeemer, the same Jesus Christ !

IN THE FORM OF
P R A Y E R S

I.

For benefactors.

ALmighty and most merciful Father, by whose tender compassion our feet are set in the *paths of righteousness*, accept our humble prayer for all the instruments of thy mercies to us. Make their days *happy*; and give them the *joyful hopes of pleasing thee*. Let their *piety and compassion*, and all their *anxious efforts to save the souls of others*, plead for their own immortal spirits at thy throne, *O God!*—Thou hast shewn thy favor to us: we beseech thee to extend thy *loving kindness* to all the *children of men*! Be thou a *tower of defence*, that no affliction may reach them! This we beg through the mediation of *Jesus Christ*, the great friend of mankind, who offered up his *life*, that we might *live for ever*; and who now *liveth and reigneth* at thy right hand, *O Father eternal*, and thou *O blessed holy Spirit, one supreme almighty God!* Amen.

2.

For the same.

O Lord God of heaven, mercifully behold the faithfulness of all those who serve thee with a *pure and willing mind!*

mind! Shower down thy choicest blessings on the heads of our *benefactors*. Increase their *piety*, and prosper their labors in thy vineyard, that it may bring forth an abundant increase, to the present and everlasting good, and happiness of mankind; and so dispose *their* hearts to do that which is right in thine eyes, that *they* may save their own souls alive! This we beg, O merciful Father, through the mediation of Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Redeemer! Amen.

3.

For Grace.

O Lord of righteousness, and Father of eternal glory! thou great original from whom all things proceed! Cherish us with the bright beams of thy grace, and heavenly benediction! Shed on us the dew of thy mercy! Scatter the clouds of ignorance that surround us; and render our obedience so perfect, that we may never stray from the ways of thy commandments. This we beg for Jesus Christ his sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour! Amen.

4.

On Thanksgiving.

Father of mercy, and God of consolation, who hast sent thy Son Jesus Christ to redeem mankind; we give thee our most humble and grateful thanks for the bountiful provision made for our spiritual and temporal necessities; and we beseech thee so to dispose our hearts by the influence of thy blessed Spirit, that through sincere repen-

tance,

tance, and a *steadfast faith*, we may live hereafter as become the *true disciples of Christ*, and enjoy all the glorious promises of his gospel. This we beg for the sake of the same *Jesus Christ*, the blessed Redeemer of the world. Amen !

5.

For Gratitude.

O Lord and tender Father of mankind, we pour out our hearts in thankful acknowledgments of thy unutterable goodness towards us ! Teach us ever to be watchful, that we may express our gratitude, by our *obedience*. Teach us thy will, O Lord, that our lives may be *constantly* devoted to *thy service*, and every hour employed to *thy glory*. This we beg for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, who *died* that we might *live for ever* ! Amen !

6.

For Gratitude, Concord, and Peace.

O Lord, we beseech thee, accept the tribute of our thanks for thine *inestimable goodness* in the *creation*, and thy unbounded mercies in the *redemption* of mankind ! Let the remembrance of our past dangers, give us the greater comfort in our *present retreat*, and so effectually teach us thy will, that we may never depart from our *obedience* to thy holy commandments. Let a true spirit of piety reign in our hearts, that *concord*, and *peace*, and *joy* may abound in these dwellings, to the *glory of thy name*, and the salvation of our immortal souls ! This we beg through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. Amen !

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7.

7.

For Concord and Agreement.

O merciful Lord, who hast been graciously pleased to deliver us from the bondage of sin, and to show us the paths of righteousness, banish far from us all *jealousy* and *foolish contention*; and let no unseemly word fall from us, to interrupt our peace, or prevent our imitating the meekness of our blessed Redeemer. This we beg for the sake of the same *Jesus Christ* our Lord and Saviour! Amen.

8.

For Purity of Conversation.

O Lord almighty, whose watchful eye is ever present, and sees our hearts; with shame and anguish we bewail the foul thoughts, words, and deeds committed against thee. Give us thy grace most carefully to avoid the same for the future! Set a watch, *O Lord*, at the door of our lips, that no evil discourse may be ever heard amongst us. This we beg for *Jesus Christ* his sake. Amen!

9.

For the same.

O Lord, we offer up our spirits to thee, in *purity* of heart, and *simplicity* of mind. Suffer us not, *O merciful Father*, to provoke thine *anger* and *wrathful displeasure*, but let this our retreat from sin, so cleanse our *souls* from *pollution*, and our *bodies* from *disease*; that it may be a *glorious monument*

ment of thy grace, and all the ends of the earth see and adore thy power ! Save us, O God of mercy, through the merits of thy spotless Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen!

10.

For Forgiveness of others.

O merciful Lord God, we beseech thee, of thine infinite mercy, to forgive the offences we have committed against thee, and pardon those who have been the cause of our transgressions ! Thy blood, O BLESSED JESUS, was shed for thine enemies, suffer not the companions of our guilt to perish ! Turn their hearts to thy righteous paths, O Lord, that they may no longer rebel against thy commandments. Turn their hearts, O Lord, and let them behold the things which belong to their peace, before they are hid from their eyes for ever ! This we beg, O merciful Father, for the sake of HIS spotless soul who died to redeem the world. Amen !

II.

Under Afflictions.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, forget us not in thy mercy, nor hide the brightness of thy countenance from our afflicted minds ! Consider, and hear us, O Lord God, that our hearts may be joyful in thy salvation ! Our Fathers hoped in thee, under all their afflictions, and thou didst deliver them. Help us, O LORD, that we may put our trust in thee ! Thou despisest not the contrite heart ;

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hide not thy face from us when we call upon thee. Display thy glory, O LORD of heaven, and succor us for thy mercies sake, that all the kindreds of the nations may see thy goodness, and parental care, O FATHER ALMIGHTY, for Jesus Christ his sake. Amen !

12.

Under the same.

O Lord God of Israel, we put our trust in thee ! Hear us, we beseech thee, for thy mercies sake. Whilst the whole earth pays homage to thee, lift us up, that we may magnify thy name, O Lord of heaven ! Incline thine ear unto us, who stretch forth our hands unto thee ; and let our prayer come before thy throne ! Abhor not our souls, O Lord ! Shew us the way that we should walk in, that we may raise our souls to thee. Teach us to do that which pleases thee, that thy Spirit may direct our paths in righteousness. Accept this our humble petition, O Lord God omnipotent, through the mediation of the mighty Prince and Saviour of the world. Amen !

13.

For Industry and Resignation.

O almighty Lord, who in thy wisdom hast appointed the various offices of human life, we beseech thee, whatever we do, or think, that it may be to thy glory. Let every day add new strength to the good habits which we are now endeavoring to acquire. Confirm them, O Lord, whilst

whilst the opportunity is afforded us, that they may make the deepest impression on our minds. *Confirm them, O merciful Father, that we may delight to exercise our hearts in piety, and our hands in labor!* Give us, O Lord, such upright minds, that we may acquit ourselves acceptably in thy fight, through the remainder of our days; and when the *toilsome journey of life* is ended, receive us, O Lord, into thy *heavenly rest*, for the sake of *Jesus Christ* our Lord. Amen!

FOR ONE PERSON.

14.

For Contentment.

O eternal Lord, who in the gracious dispensations of thy providence hath appointed my state and condition, banish from my heart all *murmuring* and *discontent*: give me a *meek* and *humble* spirit, and let the restraints of my calling become *pleasant* to me; that as I am freed from the anxious cares of *power* and *riches*, my *seriousness* and *piety* may be the more improved, and every *hardship* in my *service* discipline my spirit, and train me up to *virtue*; and lead me, O Lord, in the steps of my great master *Jesus Christ*! Amen.

15.

For Industry, and Resignation to Providence.

O Lord God almighty, who hast ordained, by thy *unchangeable decrees* that *man* shall eat his bread in *toil* and *labor*, give me, I beseech thee, a *thoughtful* and *industrious* disposition. Let my *diligence* and *innocency* go hand in

hand, and administer to their *mutual* support. Teach me an *entire submission* to thy will, and give me so true a relish of an *humble* condition, that the *life* of my *blessed* Saviour, and the *glorious example* he hath set before mine eyes, may appear with a *far brighter lustre* than any earthly glory ! This I beg, O Lord, for HIS sake who redeemed this sinful world. Amen !

16.

For Fidelity in Servitude.

O Lord, the righteous judge of men, let thy fear be always before mine eyes, that I may *faithfully* discharge my duty, nor ever fall under THY displeasure. Let neither *indolence* nor *falsehood* betray my soul ; but make me *zealous* in my *master's service**, that my conduct towards him may express my *gratitude*, for all the *mercies*, which THOU hast vouchsafed unto me. Thy all-piercing eye, O Lord, can see my inmost thoughts, and minutest actions ! Let my *love* and *honor*, my *fidelity* and *respect* for my master, be apparent in *his* sight, that I may delight in promoting *his* prosperity : and let *our united* endeavors advance *thy* glory, and the *happiness* of mankind. Give him, O Lord, a just sense of his *eternal* obligations to *justice* and *piety*, *temperance*, and every other virtue, that no part of his conduct may disturb the repose of my soul, but render my *sincerity* towards him the more acceptable to thee. This I beg, O merciful Father, for Jesus Christ his sake. Amen !

17.

* Or *mistress's service*.

For Obedience in Servitude.

O Almighty Lord, who delightest in the obedience of thy creatures, give me a meek and contrite spirit, that imitating the humility of my Lord and Saviour, I may obtain that REST of soul, that PEACE of mind, which is far beyond what the world can give. Inspire my heart with an utter abhorrence of all *falsehood* and *evasion*; and let me dare to confess the truth, to whomsoever has a right to require it. Make me patient under reproof, and diligent in performing my duty; that my obedience to my^{*} master may be accepted as obedience to thee. Remove far from me all pride and haughtiness of spirit, and teach me how to support myself under unjust reproaches, that with patience, and resolution, and singleness of heart, I may subdue evil with good, and ever possess my soul in tranquility.— Let my conscience be always void of offence towards thee, and my fellow-creatures, that amidst all the follies and iniquities which surround me, I may acquit myself with applause in thy sight, O Lord, and receive the great reward which thou hast promised, in Jesus Christ my blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen!

For Gratitude.

Almighty and most merciful Father, who of thine infinite goodness hast delivered me out of the hands of the de-

stroyer, and preserved me by the *kindness of my fellow-creatures*, teach me how to promote *their happiness*, that whilst I pour out my heart in the *warmest gratitude* to thee, I may advance the *great cause* of virtue and religion in the world. Let thy *returning sabbaths*, which I have so often abused, always *inspire* my heart with *thanksgiving*, and bring me fresh consolation. Teach me to *delight* in thy *worship*, and to *adore* thy name *with the most exalted joy*; that the *incense* of my prayers may reach thy throne, O God! And those *necessary* things, which for my *unworthiness* I dare not, and for my *blindness* I cannot ask, thou mayest vouchsafe to *give me*, for the merits of thy dear Son, my blessed Saviour and Redeemer. Amen!

19.

At the point of Death.

— O ALMIGHTY GOD, to whom belong the issues of *life and death*, visit my trembling heart, and save me for thy mercies sake! Receive my spirit, O Lord, into those heavenly habitations, where the souls of them that sleep in Christ enjoy perpetual *rest and happiness*! Grant this, O merciful Father, for the sake of the same Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Redeemer! Amen.

20.

On the same.

Father of angels and men, almighty Lord and Creator of universal Being, in whom do live the spirits of the just
made

made perfect ! O let my soul be acceptable in thy sight ! Wash it in the blood of that immaculate Lamb which was shed to take away the sins of the world ; that the *defilements* I have contracted may be *purged* away, and my soul be accepted through the merits of *Jesus Christ*. And thou, O blessed Redeemer of the world, forgive my transgressions, and plead my cause at the throne of mercy. Amen !

21.

For the Evening.

O Lord God almighty, who by thy provident care hast conducted me in safety to the conclusion of this day ; forgive the offences which I have been guilty of against thee, whether in *thought*, or *word*, or by any *action* unworthy my character as a christian, that I may retire to rest in humble confidence of thy *protection*. Let the return of the hour of sleep remind me of the *shortness of life*, and teach me what it is to die ! — Thus kneeling in thy *awful presence* I offer up the *sacrifice of my heart* ; accept it, O Lord, as my *evening oblation* ; and hearken unto my unfeigned *prayer* ! Banish from me all *evil desires*, that my own heart may not conspire to my ruin. *Protect* me, I beseech thee, from all the perils of this night. Be thou my *guard*, and my *defence*, and finally receive me into thy *eternal rest*, for *Jesus Christ his sake*. Amen !

Morning

Morning H Y M N.

Awake my glory here the rosy morn

Doth with a purple blush the skies adorn :

Awake each faculty, awake and sing,

In holy raptures my Almighty King !

In notes divine let my glad voice proclaim,

His mighty goodness and eternal name !

Let my loud praises through the world resound,

While crowding nations listen all around !

But, O my God, thy wonders are too great

For tongue to speak, or verse to celebrate :

So vast thy mercies, and thy truth so high,

They pierce the clouds, and reach beyond the sky !

Morning Ejaculations.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes : O thou that dwellest in
the heavens !

Let my complaint come before thee, O Lord : Give
me understanding according to thy word !

My help cometh from thee, O Lord, who hath made
heaven and earth ! Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.

Make me to go in the paths of thy commandments,
for therein is my desire.

Evening Ejaculations.

Blessed art thou, O Lord ; O teach me thy statutes !

Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I should
not sin against thee.

With

With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments
of thy mouth.

Thou hast granted me thy loving kindness in the day-
time. In the *night-season* will I sing, and make my prayer
unto thee, *O God of my life!*

Night HYMN.

Sleep is a death, O make me try,
By sleeping what it is to die;
And down as gently lay my head,
Within my grave, as on my bed.

How e'er I rest, *great God!* let me,
Awake again at last with thee;
And thus assur'd, behold I lie,
Securely, or to wake or die.

These are my drowsy days, in vain
I do now wake, to sleep again;
O come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever!

On

On free Agency.

LETTER XIV.

To the same.

THOSE know but little of the human heart, who do not perceive an evident inconsistency in it. No one can be ignorant that there is a perpetual struggle between his *good* and *evil* propensities. This seems to mark out, in the *strongest characters*, our being fallen from something we *originally* were, *agreeably to what is related in the sacred writings, of the fall of man*: and however some may pretend to refine away the plain sense and meaning of the scriptures, we can never make that account more intelligible; nor can we, by any forced construction, convert it into an *allegory*, without subjecting the whole scripture to be construed by every individual, as his *fancy* may suggest to him.

This sad truth is evident, at this day, that one *wilful sin* plays havoc with the soul, and as a wound weakens and corrodes the whole frame of the body, so does the transgression of the divine commandment pervert the true current of our thoughts, and incline our souls, that is, our wills and affections, not only to the repetition of the same fault, but also of many others. Hence we may infer how it came to pass, that man is what we find him to be, though originally made very differently.

That

That we are *free* cannot possibly admit of any wise man's doubt; yet our belief or assurance that we are *free* seems to be often suspended, as if we wished that we were *not free*; which in fact is wishing that we might act from *instinct*, and not from *reason*; and that from being next in order to *angels*, we might be on a level with *brutes*. The sublime *Milton*, speaking of the determinations of the great author of nature, respecting man, says,

- “ ————— *I made him just and right,*
 “ *Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.*
 “ *Such I created all th' æthereal pow'rs,*
 “ *And spirits, both them who stood, and them who*
 “ *fail'd :*
 “ *Freely they stood, who stood; and fell, who fell.*
 “ *Not free, what proof cou'd they have giv'n sincere*
 “ *Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,*
 “ *Where only what, they needs must do, appeared,*
 “ *Not what they wou'd ? What PRAISE cou'd they*
 “ *receive ?*
 “ *What PLEASURE I, from such obedience paid,*
 “ *When will and reason, (reason also is choice)*
 “ *Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,*
 “ *Made passive both, had serv'd NECESSITY,*
 “ *Not ME ?* ” —————

Who in his *right mind* can resist this plain *reasoning* ?
 You need only knock at your *own breast*, and enquire
 of your *own heart*, if you do *what you can do* ; and if you

do it with a *willing mind*? What *greater end* can there be in life, than to *worship God*, and as far as our limited powers will carry us, to display the glory of the MOST HIGH in the redemption of mankind, by his Son *Jesus Christ*; ever remembering that his *mercy* is as infinite as his *wisdom*: and as he knows of what we are made, it is an offence against his *mercy* and *wisdom* to presume that he does not make all those allowances, which our reason and knowledge of his promises suggest to us, will be considered by *infinite wisdom*, especially when we find, by the experience of the best of men, that with all the exertion of our powers, there is reason to fear we should otherwise perish.

On the other hand, to *expect* that he will *overlook* what our *own hearts condemn*; and take no cognizance of *crimes* which the most careless observer considers as *punishable*, if they are not *repented of*, is equally an *affront* to the *wisdom* and *justice* of *God*.

Our great misfortune is, that we generally impute so much to our *depravity*, or deviation from that *original better state*; and so little to our own *conscious neglect*, which we blend under the *common name of depravity*, that we often refine away the *substance of repentance*: and consequently are heedless in the performance of it, notwithstanding the *consciousness* of our *offences*, which we know we ought in *all reason* to repent of, in *sackcloth and ashes*. In this view there is great danger that our *own hearts* will be *ingenious to deceive us*, and deal *unfairly*, by inducing us to neglect the *proper means*, and the use of such *abi-*

lity, as GOD has given us, to *chuse the best*, and to *refuse the worst*.

To form a true idea of our condition, we must consider, that *deliberate and habitual sins* ought ever to stand distinguished from those of *mistake or surprise*; and in order to repentance, we should see the *folly*, as well as the *malignity* of *sin*. I dare say you have often imagined that you was enjoying the most desirable thing in nature, I mean *liberty*, in *doing as you pleased*, at the very time that you was a *slave* to the power and dominion of your *vicious appetites*, or *foolish fancy*. We may amuse ourselves with fine-spun notions; but the *christian religion* most assuredly lays us under *restraints*: yet examine them *attentively*, and you will find they are such restraints, as naturally produce the *true and real freedom of the mind*, which is the very thing on earth, most grateful to *human nature*.

To suppose that the *service of God* is *slavery*, is to make the *Almighty* a *Tyrant*; or to imagine that the *service of the Devil* is *freedom*, is to make him a *just prince*. We often impose on ourselves; we call things by *wrong names*, and fix *false ideas* to them; and thus it happens that we *bug* the most *cruel bondage*, and call it *freedom*; and we *mean* the *freedom* of acting as we please; and consequently if we had pleased to be *virtuous*, we might have been so. But we may for the same reason, if we please, barter away our *freedom* for *slavery*. “If a man’s *body* be under *confinement*, or he be *impotent* in his limbs, he is then “deprived of his *bodily liberty*: and for the same reason, “if his *mind* be blinded by *foolish errors*, and his *reason* “over-

“ over-ruled by *violent passions*; this is plainly as great
 “ *slavery*, and as true a *confinement*. It is very evident,
 “ that what *impotency of limbs*, or *bonds*, are to the *natural*
 “ *liberty of the body*; the very same thing is *vice*, *igno-*
 “ *rance*, or *passion*, to the *moral liberty of the mind*.
 “ Wherefore as the *body* is *free*, when it is moved by
 “ the natural action of the *blood* and *spirits*, and not by
 “ the *convulsive motions* and *violence of a disease*; so the
 “ *mind* is then, and then only *free*, when its *choice* is di-
 “ rected by the natural motive of *right reason*, and not
 “ by the violent force of a *blind* and *headstrong passion*.”
 In the mean while, “ the highest improvement and per-
 “ *fection of liberty*, in the present life, is, when a man
 “ not only obeys the *commands of God*, but does it *habi-*
 “ *tually with ease and pleasure*.”

Thus you see how much depends on *habit*, and the ac-
 quifition of that *freedom*, which is the price of our *labor*,
 after the true *riches* of the mind: and recourse to the *divine*
aid, to acquire true happiness, is the ultimate end of our
 pursuits. The grace of God is the only counterpoise to
 the *sinful propensities* of our *corrupted* nature; but if we
 use our own freedom, in its true and proper extent, that
grace will never be denied to us, though it is presumption
 to fix the *time* and *manner* of its operation. Farewel.

On Repentance.

LETTER XV.

To the same.

YOU see that I am not *scanty* in my zeal for the service of those whose cause I espouse. As you are now in a capacity of thinking *what you have been about*, I hope you will also think of what you *ought to do*; and that you will *not* consider *repentance* as a word of little or no signification: it has a strong meaning in the *common affairs of life*, and if there is a *heaven* or a *hell*, it cannot be less important with respect to *eternity*. Virtue claims our blushes in secret, if we act improperly; shall we be *less ashamed* when mens eyes are upon us? It is necessary for you to live in some degree exposed to *observation*, even in your retirement: several of you must * sleep in the same room; some may not be *so piously* inclined as others; but I trust you will find that *no one* will have the *outrageous impudence* to say any thing that is *indecent, improper*, or unbecoming the condition of one who pretends to be a *penitent*: but if she should, I advise you by all means to admonish her: let it be done in *gentle words*, but not without such *resolution* as shall

* Four, five, or six persons, according to the number in the house, sleep in one room.

shall indicate that you are *determined* not to *connive* at any thing which is contrary to the pious design of the *institution*; and the declaration *which she made upon her admittance, that she would conform to the rules of the house*. If one, so perverse, should happen to come into your *ward*, remind her in the most *persuasive terms*, that the *existence* of such a charity as this, depends on the objects of it being restrained within the bounds of that *decency*, which it is *infamous* to neglect in *common life*, much more so if transgressed by those, who, conscious of an accumulated *load of guilt*, fly from the world to *implore* the pardon of an *offended God*!

With respect to yourself in particular, to whose *understanding* I am now appealing, as your friend, let me entreat you by all the sacred *tyes of love to God*, to endeavor to *remember the time past*, only to *repent* of it, and to forget all those abominable scenes,

“ *Which blot the face and blush of modesty.*”

“ *Let modest matrons at the MENTION start,*

“ *And blushing virgins, when they read the ANNALS,*

“ *Skip o’er the guilty page.*” —

If your heart labors not with *anxious efforts* to purge away its *filth*; nor sees with *indignation* those crimes, which you *profess* to *repent* of, where is your *sincerity*?

“ *SEEMING DEVOTION* does but gild a knave,

“ *That’s neither faithful, honest, just, nor brave:*

“ *But*

" *But where RELIGION does with VIRTUE join,*

" *It makes a woman like an angel shine.*"

True *penitence* is the *object* you have now in view : it is the *foundation* of your *hope*, and the *remedy* of your *affliction*. Instead of *daring* to profane your tongue with any *unhallowed* sounds, rather in the *energetic* language of the poet,

" *Let wretches loaded hard with guilt, as you are,*

" *Bow with the weight, and groan beneath the burden,*

" *Creep, with the remnant of the strength they've left,*

" *Before the footstool of the heav'n they've injured.*"

Remember that you are now *learning a lesson*, of no less importance than how to *appear before the God* that made you ; and you must be *sensible*, it is impossible you can be *ignorant* that

" *THERE is no SHUFFLING, there the action lies*

" *In its true nature ; and we ourselves compell'd*

" *Ev'n to the teeth and forehead of our faults,*

" *To give in evidence.*" —

To be a *penitent* for the *sin* of *prostitution*, or for any other *sin*, requires a *deep sense* of the *heinousness* of such *sin* ; and some *time*, and some *reflection* are necessary, to learn truly how to *repent*. To use our *freedom* to do those things which we think we ought to do, and which we

have long *neglected* : and to *refrain* from such as we think we ought not to do, which we have long *practiced*, is no trifling task, for it constitutes the most essential part of *repentance*, and is the best and *strongest proof* of our grief for what is past.

Nor should we refine away our sorrow. If tears fall from our eyes, as well as grief reigns in our hearts, for our offences against men ; surely they are no less due for our offences against God. The sublime *Milton*, with his celestial imagination, *supposes Adam*, after the transgression of our first parents, in their *last extremity*, to express himself in these words :

- “ *What better can we do, than to the place*
- “ *Repairing where HE judg’d us, prostrate fall*
- “ *Before him reverent, and there confess*
- “ *Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, WITH TEARS*
- “ *Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air*
- “ *Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign*
- “ *Of sorrow unfeign’d, and humiliation meek ?*
- “ *Undoubtedly he will relent and turn*
- “ *From his displeasure ; in whose look serene,*
- “ *When angry most he seem’d and most severe,*
- “ *What else but FAVOR, GRACE, and MERCY shone ?”*

The poet goes on,

- “ *Thus they in lowliest plight repentant kneel’d*
- “ *Praying, for from the mercy-seat above*

“ *Pri-*

- “ *Prevenient grace descending had remov'd*
- “ *The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh*
- “ *Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breath'd*
- “ *Unutterable, which the spirit of prayer*
- “ *Inspir'd, and wing'd for heaven with speedier flight*
- “ *Than loudest oratory.*”

Here one may observe, that though the poet supposes two persons performed this solemn act of weeping for their sins, yet as man and wife they were *one flesh*; they were also privy to each other's guilt, and no other human eye to see them *. But if the *general instruction* given us by our *great Lord and Saviour*, is to *retire* when we *pray*, and that what we do acceptably to God in *secret*, will be rewarded *openly*; surely we ought not to make this kind of sorrow for our sins, the object of any human sight. There is an indecency in some kinds of grief for worldly objects, before the eyes of men; but our tears that fall to appease an *offended God*, are of a nature not to be exposed to *common view*: therefore our modern *sectaries* and *enthusiasts* have very ill understood this matter, when they meet together to *quake* or *groan*, to *sigh* or *weep*, or *hum* in consort. Those who know the power of *sympathy* in souls, if they have the command of *words* with *action*, can set the *passions* of a whole assembly at work, at their pleasure, and they *may do it, like actors for gain*, if they
are

* The mention of this circumstance makes me think of the false reserve of some married persons, in regard to being seen on their knees by each other.

are so disposed : but this may be but *mere acting*, and is subject, under some circumstances, to the imputation of *frenzy*, or *hypocrisy*, or a mixture of both.

“ ’Tis not alone my inky cloak,
 “ Nor customary suit of solemn black,
 “ Nor windy suspiration of forc’d breath;
 “ No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
 “ Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
 “ That can denote me truly. These indeed seem;
 “ For they are actions that a man might play :
 “ But I have that within that passes show,
 “ These but the trappings, and the suits of woe.”

I would not by any means you should imagine, that *honest tears* may not occasionally flow in *public*. Virtue in *distress*, and *great minds* struggling with *adversity*, drew tears from the *Son of God himself*. And of all mere *human designs*, the *theatre*, were it not too frequently abused, seems best calculated to exercise this noblest passion of the *human breast* :

“ For this the TRAGIC MUSE first trod the stage,
 “ Commanding tears to flow through ev’ry age :
 “ TYRANTS no more their SAVAGE nature kept,
 “ And FOES TO VIRTUE wondered how they wept.”

But if the representation of things can command grief;
 and *fictitious adversity* bathe the cheeks in tears ; surely the

great

great truths of christianity, the *real* distresses of human nature, with regard to *conscious guilt* against heaven, being properly represented from the pulpit, may be allowed to produce the same effect ; but this is foreign to a mechanical kind of grief. Sorrow which arises *spontaneously* dignifies tears ; but the constant practice of meeting to *quake, groan, &c.* is so very *ridiculous*, and oftentimes so *mere a farce*, that *common modesty* is put to the blush whenever it is mentioned.

You must have often observed, in the course of your life, that the *ingenuous confession* of faults, and the *professions of amendment*, have a kind of *magic power* in disarming the *resentments* of men. Guilty as we may be, such confessions still carry along with them the tokens and signatures of *inherent virtue*, and delight the *understanding*, as well as charm the *hearts* of men, when they are least estranged from *God*. *Beauty* has not greater influence on the *imagination* of those who are most susceptible of its power, than the *ingenuous* acknowledgments of *past faults*, provided it be attended *with an apparent resolution of amendment for the time to come* : and if this is of such *efficacy* with *frail mortals*, who can only judge from *appearances* ; what mighty *hopes* may we not entertain of true *repentance* in the sight of *God*, whose mercy is infinite ; whose wisdom is without bounds, and to whom our hearts are *open as the mid-day sun* ! And how *foolish*, as well as *criminal*, must those be, who *pretend to repent*, and yet do not *mean it*, though they profess a *belief in a*

God; and are *sensible*, that their *thoughts* are always open to him as a *tremendous judge*!

It is no less obvious, that the mind moves by *slow paces*: *appearances* may *flatter*, but we ought not to expect that great *sinners* will at once become great *saints*: nor can we presume, where the *heart* is *foul*, that the *tongue* will not sometimes utter *perverse things*. Moderation in opinion, as well as in practice, must be observed, and those enthusiasts who are liberal in consigning their neighbors over to perdition, are so far in danger of falling into it themselves.

Notwithstanding the great benevolence on which this *Charity* is founded, you may easily discern, that if a *strict œconomy* and *discipline* are not kept up, such a *house of penitents*, or such a *temporary retreat* for the *wretched* would be but a *mere name*, and answer no purpose but to abuse the *generosity* of mankind. For this I appeal to *your own reason*; and as I entertain *very high hopes* of *your correcting your own faults*, I flatter myself your *good sense*, your *humility*, your regard to the *institution*, as well as your sense of religion, will all concur, and induce you to be *attentive*, in your proper station, that others may do *their duty* also. I mean, that you will do well to give information to the *superiors of the wards* if any thing should be amiss, that if the evil be not redressed, the *matron* may be acquainted. There is no *trifling* with any *false notions of honor* and *delicacy*, in a case where the *strictest* order must be observed. But, I say, we must take care to proceed with so much
meek-

meekness, candor, and integrity, that in mending one evil, we may not introduce another.

You will be *more particularly* informed how you are to act in these cases, and it will be no less an *honor* than it is your *duty*, to shew great respect to the *matron*, and to those who are appointed by the *governors* to regulate the conduct of the house.—The *matron* is *sensible* and *polite*, *zealous* for the good of the charity in all respects, and very attentive to the great article of is a *sober* and *religious* deportment, instructing the women, at the same time, how to get their bread in the world with *credit* and *reputation*.

When I caution you not to *connive* at the *folly* or *iniquity* of others; let your first concern be to watch YOURSELF. You say that you are sensible there is *one* who knows all our *thoughts*, sees our *actions*, and hears our *words*. Remember that your *thoughts*, *words*, and *actions* have been such as require a *strict amendment*!

I shall be glad to hear a good account of you, from the *matron*, who will deliver this into your hands, and extremely rejoiced to be able to make such report of you from her, to your *uncle*, as may procure you his *favor* and *protection*. Thus may we hope the *joyful* day will soon come, when we shall see you a *happy woman*: but I am as well persuaded this can *never* happen till you are a *virtuous one*, as I am that I shall *die*: nay, it seems to me *more certain*; for the world *may* come to an *end* before my death, but *never* can the *vicious* be *happy*, or the truly *virtuous* be *miserable*.

Inclosed

Inclosed I send you a *Hymn*, proper to the *circumstances* you are now in : I hope you will make the *sense*, as well as the *words* of it your own. I also send you some *meditations* and *short prayers*, which I recommend to you. Perhaps they may be of as great use hereafter, as at this time; and under a *better situation* than yours is at present; for *human nature is the same*, though all of us are not guilty *alike*, nor *criminal in the same sins*, in the *same degree*, and yet *miserable sinners*. FAREWEL.

H Y M N.

I.

How lovely is this CALM RETREAT!

Where SIN and SORROW cease;

Where mercy guides the wand'ring feet

To tread the ways of PEACE.

2.

Here let me rest, no more employ,

My fatal snares to sin;

Nor the VAIN DREAM OF GUILTY JOY

Betray my heart within.

3.

For what avails relief from SHAME,

From WANT and OUTWARD WOES,

If still impell'd with SINFUL FLAME

The heart POLLUTED glows?

4.

*Short is the time that guilt can please,
But GREAT the wretch's cost ;
To shame, to want, and DIRE DISEASE
Betray'd, abandon'd, lost.*

5.

*Rise then, my soul ! the hours review,
When aw'd by GUILT and fear
Thou durst not HEAV'N for mercy sue,
Nor hope for pity HERE.*

6.

*Dry'd are thy tears, thy GRIEFS are fled
Dispell'd each BITTER care ;
See ! heav'n itself has lent its aid
To raise thee from DESPAIR.*

7.

*Hear then, O GOD ! thy work fullfil !
And from thy MERCY's throne ;
Vouchsafe me strength to do THY WILL
And to resist MY OWN.*

8.

*So shall my soul each pow'r employ
Thy MERCIES to adore,
Whilst heav'n itself proclaims with joy
One PARDON'D sinner more !*

DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS ON REPENTANCE AND PARDON OF SIN.

I.

To embrace the opportunity of repentance.

O Lord God of mercy! who in thine infinite goodness hast given me an opportunity to collect my thoughts, and see the dangers that surround me; with shame and confusion of face I acknowledge my faults, whilst my sins stand in array before me. How had I wandered from thy paths, O Lord! Cast me not away from thy presence, nor take thy holy Spirit from me! O'erwhelmed with conscious guilt, I fly to thee for mercy, O forgive my presumptuous sins, and pardon my foul offences! Soften my relenting heart, and restore my innocence! I now look back with horror on the dreadful precipice, from whose summit my feet were slipping, and my soul on the brink of perdition! How deeply was I plunged in iniquity: and how wonderfully hast thou delivered me! Give me, O Lord, a true sense of my condition, and let floods of penitential tears flow from my eyes, and cleanse my heart from guilt! Help me, O Lord, for thy mercy's sake! Help me with thy grace, O HEAVENLY FATHER, for Jesus Christ his sake!

2.

For the same.

O ALMIGHTY FATHER, and great deliverer! Behold a miserable offender standing before thee, a monument of thy mercy. *To thee will I confess my sins, for thou art my God!* Thou who hast graciously afforded me this solemn call to repentance; *O let it find way to my heart!* Teach me to cast mine eyes *within*, and examine my conscience, that I may contemplate the *state of my soul*, and meditate on the *life to come!* Present *Eternity* to my view, O Lord, in all its *dreadful*, all its *pleasing* forms; and let me behold the things which belong to my peace, before they are *hid from mine eyes for ever!* Teach me to consider my present life as a *state of probation*, and to regard it as a *real passage to another Being.*

Thus defended from the destructive influence of *bad examples*, let me seek acquaintance with my *own heart*, and court the healing *chastisements* of thy *merciful hand.* — Let the sufferings of my *blessed Saviour*, and the rebellious sins of men, which occasioned his *agonizing pains*, be the subject of my *daily thoughts*; and let his *meritorious death* atone for my offences!

3.

For the same.

O LORD GOD, to whom it belongeth to punish *sinners*, and to reward those who *diligently seek thee*; look down with an eye of *pity and compassion* on a *miserable offender!*

Thou

Thou art graciously pleased to afford me a *trial* of my constancy ; O send me *thy help* to discharge my duty with inflexible integrity. Let *patience* and *resignation*, *humility* and *contentment* reign triumphant in my heart ! Let every day add *strength* to my *faith* and *firmness* to my *resolution*, that I may *delight* in offering up my *prayers*, and in shewing forth the *sincerity* of my *repentance* ! O assist me in the great work which I have undertaken, nor let me *dare* to think that any careless acknowledgement of my sins, will be accepted by thee !

4.

For Trust in God.

O GOD MOST HIGH, O *holy and merciful Lord*, suffer me not, I beseech thee, to return into the *paths* of *perdition* ! Remind me of thy mercies past, and let me not forget thy loving kindness and favor ! Remind me of the *temporal miseries* from which I have escaped, and the *eternal punishments* which wait on *impenitent sinners* ; that however thy providence may dispose of me, I may labor with my hands for comfort and support, and *die with hunger*, if such *thy pleasure* should be, rather than *rebel against thy holy laws* ! I will trust in thee, O *merciful Father*, for an happy issue to all my troubles and distresses. *Where* will be my *hope* if thou *hidest thy face* from me ? *Where* will be my *trust* if I *forsake thy love* ? Let *faith*, and *hope*, and *charity*, and *peace* reign in my heart, O *Lord*, and raise my soul to *heaven* ; that I may shew forth thy *praise*, and the *ends of the earth* adore *thy holy name* !

Grant

Grant this my *humble* petition, O God of heaven, through the *mediation* of my *crucified Lord and Redeemer* !

5.

For Forgiveness.

O LORD GOD, who beholdest all the *secret springs of human actions*, and the *evils* to which mankind are exposed ; have mercy upon me a *wretched sinner*, wandering and lost to every thought of thee. Restore me, O Lord, to a true sense of my *guilt and folly* ; and let my *tears* flow for my *disobedience* to thy righteous laws ! Forgive the offences of which my conscience is afraid, and give me grace to amend my wicked life !

6.

For the same.

Rebuke me, O Lord, but not in thine *anger* ; chasten me, but not in thy *heavy displeasure*. Turn thee, in thy wonted favor, and deliver me for thy mercies sake ! Wash me thoroughly from my sins, and cleanse me from mine iniquities. Forget me not, I beseech thee, in that hour, when I shall render up my soul. Let the never-failing merits of the Saviour of the world plead for me at thy throne, O Lord of life, that finally I may rise to *life immortal* !

7.

For Newness of Life.

O eternal God, in whose hands are the issues of *life and death*, I beseech thee awaken my heart to a true sense of
my

my condition, and arm me with resolution to resist temptations. Suffer not any earthly joy to *enchant* my soul, or *soothe* it into perdition. Thou knowest my inmost thoughts, and all the anxious wishes of my heart are open to thy view ! To thee, O Lord, I fly for succor ; heal my *wounded heart*, and restore it to perfect health, for the sake of the great Physician of souls, thy *eternal Son* !

8.

For Pardon of Sins.

ALMIGHTY GOD ! *Maker of all things, judge of all men* !—Thou sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, on whom all Beings depend ; who art ever ready to receive thy creatures who fly to thee for succor ; be not extreme to mark my offences ! Let tears of repentance flow from my offending eyes, and my heart bleed with contrition at the remembrance of my transgressions ! Thou, O BLESSED LORD, who didst suffer a *painful and ignominious* death, that I might obtain *pardon* of my sins : Thou that madest an all-sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, let not thy blood be spilt in vain for me !

9.

For the same.

O LORD GOD, to whom *vengeance* belongeth ; thou to whom *vengeance* belongeth, let not thy *wrath* be armed against me ! Look down with thy wonted goodness and compassion on a *frail and sinful* creature ! From the glories of thy *mercy-seat* extend thy pity, and *deliver* me
from

from the cruel bondage of sin : O Lord, I beseech thee, give me that perfect liberty which can be only found in a free obedience to thy laws. Try me, O Lord, and seek the ground of my heart ; prove me and examine my thoughts, and mortify my sinful vanities to that degree, that even shame and contempt for thy sake, may be, not only acceptable, but welcome to me !

IO.

For the same.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, look down, I beseech thee, in pity and compassion upon thy afflicted servant. My soul is troubled ! O let not the remembrance of my former iniquities, press too sorely on me. Give me comfort and hope in thy holy word, and so right an understanding of thy threats and promises, that I may never distrust thy mercies ! Break not the bruised reed, O LORD, nor shut up thy tender mercies in displeasure, but let me hear of joy and gladness : Shew me the brightness of thy countenance, and give me thy peace for ever !

II.

For the same.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thine indignation, neither chasten me in thy displeasure. Have mercy upon me for I am weak : heal me, for my heart is vexed. Turn thee and deliver my soul : O save me for thy mercies sake. For in death no man can remember thee ; and who can give thee thanks in the grave ! Suffer me not to work

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vanity :

vanity: but hear the voice of my weeping, and let my humble petition come before thee!

12.

For the same.

Unto thee, O LORD, do I *lift up my soul!* O MY GOD, I put my trust in thee! Shew me thy *ways*, and teach me thy *paths*. Lead me forth in thy *truth*, for thou art *the God of my salvation*, and in thee is my *hope*. O *remember* not the sins and offences of my *youth*: but according to thy *tender mercies*, which have been ever of old, think thou upon me, O Lord. Thou who guidest the *meek* in judgment, O *teach* me thy way! All thy *paths*, O LORD, are *mercy and truth*, unto such as obey thy laws! For thy name sake, O Lord, be merciful unto MY SIN, *for it is great*. — Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for *without thee* I must be ever *desolate and in misery*. Look upon my *adversity*, and forgive my sins.

13.

For the same.

O merciful Lord God of heaven, deliver my soul, and let me not be brought to confusion! Let *perfectness* and *righteous dealing* ever wait upon me, that my *hope* may securely rest in thee. Thou knowest all my *desire*, and my *longings* are not hid from thee! Forsake me not, then, O Lord, and be not far from me, O God, of my salvation!

Turn

Turn thy face from my sins, and put out all my *misdeeds* !
 Make me a *clean heart*, and *renew a right spirit* within me.
 O cast me not away from thy *presence*, but give me the
comfort of thy help, and stablish me with thy *holy spirit* !
 Let not thine ears be shut to the voice of my complaint !
 If thou wert *extreme* to mark all that is done *amiss*, what
 hopes could I cherish, or who could abide thy displea-
 sure ! But there is *mercy* with thee, *therefore* shalt thou
 be *adored* and *feared* ! MY SOUL looketh for thee, O Lord,
 and in thy *word* is my trust. Tho' the sorrows of death
 should compass me around, and the overflowings of ungod-
 lineſs should make me afraid, yet thine ears will be open to
 the complaint of those who seek thee with a *contrite* heart.
 As my *sins* cry aloud against me, let my prayers ascend with
 a *sweet savor* to thy mercy's seat, and obtain for me that
 forgiveness, without which I must perish everlastingly !

14.

For the same.

O Lord God eternal, who in compassion to *sinful man*
 didst send thine only Son to die upon the cross ; spare
 me, O Lord, whom thou hast *redeemed*, and be not *angry*
 with me for ever ! I have swallowed iniquity with *greedi-
 ness*, and delighted in *misery* : but I look back with a
 weeping heart on these my offences. O give me power
 to *subdue* the irregular sallies of my *deluded* imagination,
 and strength to act as becometh a *true and constant be-
 liever in Jesus Christ*.

Against Despondency.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, at whose bow the mountains shake, and the earth trembleth from her foundations: thy mercies are as boundless as thy power! Hear my voice, O Lord, and listen to the words of my complaint; for I am smitten with anguish of soul, and the powers of darkness surround me. But thou canst dispel the mighty griefs, and calm the sorrows of my heart: O stop the current of my woe, and suffer me not to distrust thy mercy. Relieve my distracted thoughts, and cheer my mournful spirit! Though my soul is polluted with sin, thou canst wash it clean! Vile as I am, what can my longing wishes mean, or what these anxious throbbings of my heart, if I am not sincere. Thou seest the humiliation of my soul, which no powers of language can describe! O let the rays of thy unutterable goodness shine on my trembling heart; and that precious blood which fell from the cross of Christ, heal my distempered mind!

ON

ON REPENTANCE.

1.

On Repentance, with regard to Confession of Sins.

O Almighty God, I have *offended* against thy *holy laws* ! I have followed the *foolish devices*, and irrational desires of my corrupted heart, leaving *undone* those things which I ought to *do* ; and *doing* those things which ought not to be *done* ! I have not attended to thy *word*, nor so resisted *temptations to sin*, as to acquit myself at the tribunal of my *own conscience* : how shall I stand at thy *judgment-seat* ! yet spare me, O Lord, for thy *mercies sake*, and be not *angry* with me for ever ! Wipe out my offences from the *book of remembrance*, for the sake of my blessed Mediator and Redeemer JESUS CHRIST. AMEN !

2.

On Repentance (for the use of a Family or Company.)

O LORD OMNIPOTENT, we beseech thee to deliver us from all the sins which we have committed *against* thee. Awaken those who have not yet a due sense of their *guilt*, and complete a *penitential* sorrow where it is *begun*. — Renew in us whatever is lost or decayed by our *evil habits*, and restore to us an *upright mind* ; that the wiles of *Satan* may not prevail against us, As we have thus

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escaped,

escaped, by thy *wonderful* Providence, from the *pollutions* of the world, preserve us, O Lord, from being again *entangled* therein. Keep us in a state of constant *watchfulness* and *humility*, that *meekness* and *hope* may reign triumphant in our hearts, and secure our *constancy*! This, O LORD, we beg for *Jesus Christ* his sake! *Amen.*

3.

On the same.

O Lord of life, and God of mercy, in whom whosoever trusteth will not perish for ever: give us a *serious temper of mind*, that we may collect our *wandering thoughts*, and regulate our undisciplined affections. Teach us to behold the wonders of thy mercies, in our deliverance. Extend thy goodness, that we may discern the *joys* of thy *peace*, and the *comforts* of thy *mercy*. Defend us, we beseech thee, that we may never return into the paths of sin and *misery*. Give us a due sense of the *uncertainty of life*, and an awful remembrance of the *dreadful doom* that waiteth on those who die *impenitent*: that with *contrite hearts* we may truly lament our sins, and through thy mercies obtain forgiveness, for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, our *blessed Lord and Saviour*. Amen!

Sin-

Sincerity, Industry, Fortitude and Perseverance essential to Religion.

LETTER XVI.

To the same.

IF the eyes of the ALMIGHTY are a thousand times brighter than the sun, and see our inmost thoughts, all kinds of deceit, are folly in the superlative degree ! And what foul *ingratitude* it is to God and men, to attempt to deceive those who are the instruments of his mercies to us ! — If the all-seeing eye of heaven CAN penetrate through all disguises, would you wish that the eyes of your companions or friends should be very partial to your faults ? Might not this incline you to leave those faults uncorrected ?

I must now, most seriously recommend to you to read those divine lessons, which the great friend and prophet, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world, has left as an invaluable legacy to those who are his true friends and servants. Contemplate often the persuasive eloquence with which he invites you to accept of mercy : and forget not what the conditions of that mercy are. In the mean while be assured, that true religion and useful industry mutually assist each other : the hands, as well as the heart, must have entertainment : we cannot be always on our knees ; but we do a great part of our duty to God, when we do our duty to our neighbor ; and you may be satisfied, that religion is the foundation on which all human happiness is built.

Do you think that a *temporary inclination to goodness* will, by any kind of *magic*, make you *good*? We must recur to the *precepts* of christianity, or we cannot expect to command our *passions* or *appetites*, nor consequently to enjoy the *happiness* of virtue, *here*, or the *reward* of it *hereafter*. Remember there is *nothing less than your soul at stake*. *Eternity*, to which millions of ages are but as a *moment*, waits your arrival on the other side the grave! You have lived in a state of sin against GOD: apply with the more diligence to *learn*, and with the more attention to *practise*, the duties of a *christian*: there is the utmost reason to believe *all will be well again*. You will soon find that the *precepts of christianity* soften the *hardships of life*, and render it *easy* and *pleasant*: they will give you *resolution* and *fortitude*, and enable you at once to triumph over the *deluding blandishments of forbidden pleasures*, though offered by the hand of *plenty*; and to conquer the *temptations* which arise from *poverty*. They will secure you from *present misery*, as well as *future punishment*; and could you acquire a support, ever so *pleasing* upon *other principles*, would it be possible for you to live in *comfort*, being subject to *sickness, pain, and death*, whilst you dared not even to bow your *knee*, or cast up your eyes to heaven for mercy?

Philosophers of antient times, who had obscure hints concerning the *true God*, taught many *pleasing*, and many *pompous* lessons, to arm mankind against the *evils of life*: but *pleasing* as they were, it has been well observed, that those

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lessons

lessons seldom did more than subdue *evils past*, and *evils to come*, but *evils present* generally subdued them.—Such is not the case of *christianity*: we are told from the mouth of the *Son of God himself*, that *his precepts* will exalt us, from the *depths* of distress to the *heights* of happiness. He says, “*Come unto me all ye that travel, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!*” And experience has constantly proved, that the *christian* religion affords relief, and even joy, under *every* calamity which the heart can suffer, or conceive.

If your vices have not deprived you, of all sense of good and evil; if you are not lost to *reason*, as your present conduct implies you are not; prove it, by thinking *attentively* on these things, every day of your life. *To make a thorough change of manners is not the work of a day.* Religion is a *science*, but thanks to the *Almighty*, who sent *his Son* to teach us *his will*, it is a *science* which we may soon learn, if we set heartily about it: and what is there of *any value* which is learnt without attention?

We are all of us *frail* and *sinful* creatures, and the best are subject to *err*. Such is the *imperfection* of our nature, that a great part of the *history of human life*, consists in a detail of *sins* and *sorrow*, *infirmities*, and *repentance*. But as it is appointed for us to *chuse* GOOD OR EVIL; HEAVEN and HELL depend much on ourselves: and *reason* and *common sense* tell us, that the more *conscious* we are of *infirmities*, the more *diligently* we ought to *watch*, and keep *strictly* on our guard, to resist the *approaches* of *sin*. In the mean while it is no less obvious, to every one who
really

really believes in the most sublime and holy religion of Christ, the Saviour of the world, that it is *far better* to suffer any *temporal evil*, even *death* itself, than presumptuously to offend, and with eyes open, to rush into *wickedness*. All *presumptuous sins*, properly so called, *that is*, great offences *against God*, known to be such, are not only so many proofs of *rebellion* against him; but every commission of them, from the very *nature of sin*, estranges us the more from him: and can you believe that an *open defiance* of heaven will pass *unpunished*? *Christians* who live at *enmity* with their Maker, are, with respect to the moral world, what *monsters* are in the natural world. And how can that be deemed less than *enmity*, when we believe a thing to be sinful, and yet give ourselves up to practise it? If *love* and *obedience* are the best proofs of *friendship*; *contempt* and *disobedience* are no less certain tokens of *enmity*.

To sacrifice all for the *fleeting* pleasures of the day, perhaps the *jollity* of an hour, and for a precarious supply for the *body*, to plunge the soul into *everlasting misery*! How it upbraids with *folly*! The thought *recoils* upon the *heart*; whilst the soul *shudders* at the dreadful prospect which lies before her!—Have *patience*, 'tis but for a day, perhaps *but a day* in the *literal sense*; *long* it cannot be: let the *temptation* press ever so hard, we are sure, if we resist it, we shall receive an *immediate* reward in a *peaceful mind*, whilst the *glories* of *immortality* are suspended only whilst we live *here*; and even *this life* on these terms will be crowned with *victory* and *triumph*.

Every

Every region contains *sinners enough of both sexes*, and *christian countries, alas*, abound with proofs, how ill the precepts of christianity are obeyed ! But *true* as it is, it amounts to *nothing* in our favor. If *man* is not like the *beast* that perishes ; if we are to be judged for *all our thoughts and actions*, what can we *expect* will be the issue of our trial, if we live in a *promiscuous commerce*, differing from beasts, only by transgressing the bounds which the *God of nature* has fixed for the government, even of the *brute creation* ?

You have now time to give these *momentous* considerations their due weight. Avoid every thing that can *disturb* your mind : learn *diligently*, and practise *faithfully*, those virtues which the laws of Christ have so *strongly* enjoined, and so *clearly* pointed out. Consider him as your *great Lawgiver*, your *Redeemer*, and your *Judge* ! Consider him as your *friend* too ; he *died* for you, and therefore must be so, if you comply with the *conditions* of his friendship. *Reason* and *faith* concur in this belief : it is declared in such terms, that if the *Almighty Father* were to look down from the battlements of heaven, and speak in *thunder* to the *affrighted world*, it could not well be more *obvious* than it is. If we judge from what we see of the *abandoned, impenitent* part of mankind, the impression would not remain long on their minds, were this really to happen ; for as our *Saviour*, on occasion of the same kind of enquiry, said, “ *If they believe not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*”

Exert

Exert yourself; entertain no *fond* notions of ease, but apply *diligently* to the *great business* of your *salvation* *. If we amuse ourselves, and *trifle* away life, there is no *repentance* in the grave: those must be *stupid* indeed, who do not see, that we were made for *great* and *noble* ends, and that the soul of *man*, is not of a *nature* to admit of *idleness*. We must be *happy*, or we must be *miserable* after death; and death is approaching very fast. If this is *obvious* to every child, is it not *madness* to delay a moment? Let me entreat you, by all the *ties* of *humanity*; by all the *motives* of *love* for *God*; by all the *pleasures* you hope to *enjoy*, and by all the *pains* you are *afraid* to *suffer*, in that future state to which we must soon be *changed*, to think *seriously* of these matters. Think of them continually, as the *incidents* of life occur, even from the *dawn* of day till the *midnight darkness*, when sleep closes your eyes: and remember that

“ To suppliant virtue nothing is deny’d ———

“ For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,

“ And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.”

And be assured, that there is *infinite happiness* in store for you. You will find, every day, that *virtue* will expand your views, and that which before looked *sad* and *dreary*, will change its *appearances*: you will learn how to convert every incident to your *own advantage*, and make a *virtue* of every *necessity* †. FAREWEL.

General

* See courage and constancy, vol. I. page 121.

† See happiness, vol. I. pages 98, to 114.

General Thoughts on Religion.

LETTER XVII.

To ———.

I Am not surprized that *you* should seem to be *confused* in your *ideas* with regard to *religion** : it is a common evil. We have all our *particular turns of thought*, and our *particular manner of expressing* them ; but few are qualified to give any accurate account of *their own notions*. The reason of this is *obvious*, for few of us ever make *religion* a subject of *discourse* ; nor do even the *thinking* part of mankind read the *scriptures* so often, or so *attentively* as we all ought to do : in the mean while, many are much more *ingenious* to confound themselves with the *theory*, than diligent to discover what their *own practice* is, and what it ought to be.

As to *PIETY*, *pure*, *fervent*, *humble*, *cheerful*, and *resigned*, it is a *rich jewel*, which cannot be found without *labor* ; but a plain *good understanding* bids as fair for it, as the most distinguished talents : a *good heart* is the thing most necessary, since *without this* there can be no solidity in our religion ; and *with it* we may humbly hope that great allowances will be made for our *infirmities*. A *sinless obedience* is not the lot of mortals, at least not of such mortals

* Religion in general, Vol. I. page 75.

mortals as we are ; but to *run the race* that is set before us ; to exert our strength, and when we fall, to rise by *grace*, and to be *pardoned by mercy*, seems to be the highest object, that in the general course of things, human nature can arrive at.

It was the saying of a great man, “ that the least propensity to *devotion*, is preferable to all that is possible for man to know ; ” and indeed it seems as natural to us, to be *devout*, as it is to *breathe* ; since to feel that we *live*, and not to consider the *Lord of life*, is contrary to *reason*, and all the common notions we entertain of *gratitude*, *justice*, and *equity*.

“ *Look round how Providence bestows alike*

“ *Sunshine and rain to bless the fruitful year*

“ *On diff'rent nations, all of diff'rent faiths :*

“ *And (tho' by several names and titles worship'd)*

“ *Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praise,*

“ *Since all agree to own, at least to mean,*

“ *One best, one greatest, only Lord of all.”*

But, alas ! the *great duty of consideration* is most grievously neglected : hence it arises that there is generally so little *gratitude*, and so much *infidelity* towards God ; and *infidelity* is the grand spring of *immorality*. The more our *reason* is cultivated, one would imagine the more we should be inclined to *think* : and that the more we think, *within measure*, the more naturally we should be led to distinguish ourselves from *brutes*. But we see in some

uncivilized

uncivilized countries, how *savage* mankind are ; and among the most *civilized*, that *learning*, as generally understood, and *piety*, are two very distinct things. Were it not for the contrivances of human laws, to *enforce obedience to the divine command*, and keep men in subjection, from the double motive of the *fear of temporal punishments*, as well as the *dread of everlasting misery* ; the *hope of bliss eternal* would be very ineffectual to keep the world in awe.

If such is the state of mankind, we ought to be the more distrustful of ourselves ; and when we stand, to take the more heed lest we fall. As to FAITH, *virtuous minds* are easily satisfied ; these have a natural propensity to believe what corresponds with their disposition : but it is very hard, if not *impossible*, to remove all *doubtfulness* from *vicious minds* : for supposing they had *seen* with their eyes the *miracles* recorded in the *New Testament* ; yet after the *first impression*, such *vicious persons*, *acknowledging the facts*, would raise doubts about the *consequences* ; and at length be *ingenious* enough to *deceive themselves* into a persuasion, that they might gratify their *inclinations to vice*, and yet pass with *impunity*. For the question about *faith*, is not as to the *degree of evidence*, whether we might not have more than we have ; but whether there is not *abundantly sufficient* for those who *sincerely wish to obey God*.

Nor does the difficulty arise from any *weakness in reason* concerning a *first cause*, for the most stupid and insensible *see* and *confess* it : but neither this faith, nor yet as strong a persuasion that *Jesus Christ* appeared on earth,

vested with authority from heaven, to teach mankind the *will of God*, can be *sufficient*, without accommodating our *wills and inclinations* to the divine command. When we *obey God*, we may be said to have such a *faith* in him, as we must hope will engage *his assistance and favor*; or in other words, that *such a measure of his grace* will operate on our minds, by means of that very *will and inclination* to virtue, as we may safely pronounce to be the thing most desirable to human nature; and productive of the greatest and most *permanent good* which it is capable of. But it ought to be remembered, that this habit of mind is not to be acquired without pains; *will and inclination* often leading us by a strong propensity to objects of *sense*, to the *lust of the flesh*, and the *pride of life*. Thus we are *diverted* from the pursuit of our greatest *good*: but the prize for which we contend, is of such *infinite value*, and the loss so *horrible*, reason steps in to assure us that nothing less than a degree of *madness*, can excuse our *indolence* or *cowardice*.

It is observed further, that all *civilized nations* nearly agree, with regard to the *duties of morality*, though they differ in *faith*: but there is no morality so *sublime**, nor any so well adapted to the state of mankind, as that of the christian†. The opinion that the religion of Christ forbids *innocent pleasures*; that it destroys our *true freedom*, or abridges the *true liberty* of mankind, is just as fallacious as that *vice* carries with it more *pleasure* than *virtue*;

* Charity, Vol. I. page 92.
christian, Vol. I. page 94.

† Character of a

virtue; so far from a *natural propensity* to joy being forbidden by *christianity*, there neither *is*, nor do I conceive there *can be*, any system of religion which leads to it so familiarly, by the mere force of that *love* and *kindness*, which is recommended by it. What the poet says of the SELF-LOVE of a *virtuous man*, is no less applicable to the *christian*, with respect to the influence which his religion has on his mind.

“ Friends, parents, neighbors first, it will embrace
 “ Our country next, and next all human race.
 “ Wide and still wide the o’erflowings of his mind,
 “ Take every creature in, of every kind :
 “ Earth smiles around with boundless bounty blest,
 “ And heaven beholds its image in his breast ! ”

So far from joy being forbidden, nothing can be so detrimental to the execution of our duty as CHRISTIANS, as a *melancholy* cast of thought, except that *perverse*ness of heart which leads us to fly in the face of heaven. At the same time it may be observed, that this *love* and *kindness*, this *christian* charity, or *morality*, can no more stand without *christian* faith, than any faith can stand an examination, if it undermines *morality*.

With respect to the *motives* to human actions, there can be none so high as those which are derived from religion; for none promise any reward comparable to it; and whatever may be pretended by some, who fancy themselves to be angels, you may be assured there is greater

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glory in doing a *noble* action, to a *noble end*, with regard to *ourselves*, and *society*, than if the *society* only was benefited. The poet, speaking of virtue, says,

“ *Above the worthless trophies men can raise*
 “ *She seeks not honors, wealth, nor airy praise,*
 “ *But with herself, herself the goddess pays.”*

And it is *true*, that *virtue* carries with her *part of the reward* which she promises ; she carries with her *hope* and *joy*, and the *sweet peace* which dwells in her bosom ; but the rewards of *good actions* by no means terminate in the pleasure of doing them, or in the reflection that follows : this *pleasure* indeed, is *great* and *permanent*, but it is only a *prelude* to a *higher joy* ; for I think no action can be *complete in all its parts*, if the happiness of the *actor* is not concerned in it, with regard to *eternity*, as well as *time*.

“ *Our life is short, but to extend that span*
 “ *To vast eternity is virtue’s work !* ”

Religion *moderates* and *restrains*, but by no means banishes *gladness* from our hearts. It forbids *some pleasures*, but it gives *others more lasting in their room*. A very ingenious author has remarked, that “ The contemplation of the *divine Being*, and the *exercise of virtue*, are, in their own nature, so far from excluding all *gladness of heart*, that they are perpetual *sources* of it. “ The *true spirit* of religion *cheers*, as well as *composes* “ the

“ the soul : it banishes indeed all *levity* of behavior, all
 “ *vicious* and *dissolute mirth*, but in exchange, fills the
 “ mind with a *perpetual serenity*, *uninterrupted cheerfulness*,
 “ *and an habitual inclination to please others*, as well
 “ as to be *pleased in itself*.”

Notwithstanding this, it is no paradox, that the *house of mourning* is better than the *house of feasting*. It is evident from the reason of things, and the experience of mankind, that as death is absolutely certain, and that we ought as certainly to keep our spirits in a proper state and preparation for our *dissolution* ; it is far more eligible to die in such a *habit of mind*, as this kind of mourning implies, than with such *loose, scattered, or voluptuous thoughts*, as are the ordinary attendants on such pleasurable scenes as we generally understand by the *house of feasting*. It may be observed also, that Providence has so ordered things, with regard to this world, that *pleasure* loses its name when we are glutted with it : and as mourning becomes criminal, when it *does not* bend the mind to obedience to the will of heaven, so when it *does*, this very *mourning* is converted into *joy*.

In this general view we may conclude, that there is a *certain mediocrity*, in which human virtue chiefly consists. We must not be overcome by sorrow, nor by joy ; our spirits should be equal ; remembering that the joy which arises from a well-grounded *hope* of being acceptable in the sight of God, is so solid and permanent, that all others dwindle and expire before it ; and in this sense the *christian religion* is peculiarly fraught with *joy*.

The sum and substance of the *religion of Christ* is comprehended in three words, FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY *. It consists in *faith*, or a belief in ONE GOD the *supreme Almighty Lord and Father of all, who is self-existing in absolute perfection ; infinite in power and wisdom, justice and mercy : And in JESUS CHRIST, the express image of the Father, who was sent upon earth as our SOVEREIGN, our TEACHER, our LAWGIVER, our REDEEMER, and is appointed to be our JUDGE : And in the HOLY GHOST THE COMFORTER, as the SPIRIT proceeding from GOD, by whom assistance or GRACE is afforded to men, due supplication being made for it, in order to discharge our duty, agreeably to what has been taught us by our DIVINE LAWGIVER and Saviour.*

The nature of our *composition* is confessedly *incomprehensible* to us. We carry about us a *monument of wonder* in the frame of our bodies ; how much more ought we to entertain the most *awful* regard to ourselves, as an amazing proof of the *divine workmanship*, in the constitution of our *souls* ! As we understand so little of this connection ; it is most wonderful that man should ever attempt to comprehend the *nature of God* ! This however we know, that GOD is *adorable*, and that we *must adore*, and *obey* him too. This is enough for us to know in our *present state*. It is therefore evident, that HE has not endowed us with a capacity to comprehend the *Trinity in Unity*.

When our *Saviour* asked the man, who solicited mercy in behalf of his *child*, “ *Dost thou believe ?* ” The answer

* *Faith*, Vol. I. pag. 85. *Hope*, p. 90. *Charity*, p. 92.

swer was, “ *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief!* ” or, in other words, *assist me to increase, confirm, and strengthen my belief, that thou art the true Messiah!* and direct my will and inclinations to their proper object, which I am sensible is to devote my heart to the supreme God, who gave me my Being.

The religion of *Christ* also consists in *hope*, as indeed all religions do; but this is no less than the *hope of happiness eternal, founded on the merits of no less a person than the same JESUS CHRIST, the Son of the LIVING GOD, who visited the earth as A MAN, and whose blood was shed as a PROPITIATION and atonement for the sins of the REPENTING WORLD.*—As the consideration of his *sufferings* enables us to triumph over the *afflictions* to which we are subject; the awful reflexion of his *almighty power*, humbles the soul, and the *highest exaltations* of earthly *splendor* appear as *nothing* before him.

Our religion consists also in *charity*, as the result of our belief, and as the *performance* of those duties which are required of us by the same DIVINE LAWGIVER; *that is, TO DO JUSTICE, TO SHOW MERCY, TO WALK HUMBLY BEFORE GOD; and as a consequence of the whole, to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.*

Now it seems to me impossible for you, or me, or any one, as a rational creature, to entertain this faith, or hope, or to practise this charity, and at the same time to live in any known wickedness. Obedience and rebellion, at the same time, are absolute contradictions. You may with as much consistency believe there is no God, or that he did not make

the world, though you see HIM in the work of his hands; or that Jesus Christ was not sent upon earth, though there is so very clear and authentic an history of his life, and death, supported by the evidence even of those who were his enemies: you may likewise as well suppose there will be no judgment after death; as that the guilty will pass unpunished; or in other words, that you may indulge a known sin, and yet not be obnoxious to punishment for it hereafter.

With respect to *charity*, which implies *good works*, you may also as well suppose a person to deserve the name of *good*, who is very *pious* in the *morning*, and very *wicked* in the *afternoon*, as that this virtue can prevail as a sacrifice during the continuance of a premeditated sin: nor do I comprehend how the true *charity* of a *follower of Christ* can exist, without the true piety of a *christian*.

When you consider further, that what is denominated *sin*, or a *breach of the divine law*, is clearly and expressly mentioned in the *New Testament*, by the same *divine lawgiver* himself, and also by his *authority*; there can be no doubt concerning *what is sin*. The world itself, which, as I have just observed, is the object of our *senses*, can hardly be more worthy of our *belief*, that it exists, than that every thing which is generally understood by *sin*, is highly offensive to God. This is obvious likewise from *conscience*, or the *anxiety*, the *pain* and *distress* which the mind suffers, when we trespass on the *divine laws*; and also by that conscience informing us, that if we do not repent, we shall be punished hereafter.

If

If it is not so, what can *conscience* mean? was it given for no end? We may laugh at *conscience*; so we may likewise laugh at *hunger*, but if we do not comply with the calls of it, we shall *die*: and we can no more resist the calls of this appetite, and yet keep our *bodies alive*, than we can resist the calls of *conscience*, and keep our *souls from perishing*. The only difference is, that the object of one is *present*, of the other at *some distance*, though it may reach us *every hour*.

Consider also that death closes the *whole scene*!—there is no *repentance* in the grave! We are now under *probation*; what think you will be the *consequence after death*, when we are judged according to that *law* which we are now *commanded* to walk in; and that *conscience* which we are now *commanded* to obey, if we *do not walk* in the one, nor *obey* the other?

Faith, hope, and charity seem to depend on each other; and it is not possible to reject *either*, and be intitled to the *glorious rewards of christianity*. Agreeably to this state of the argument, with respect both to *speculative* and *practical divinity*, as well as the condition of mankind, you find our church prays, “*Give unto us the increase of faith, hope and charity; and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command* *.”

For the same reason it is obvious that every one, in his right mind, must see the necessity of *repentance*, not only as it is expressed by *sorrow*, but also by *amendment of life*.

* Collect for the 14th sunday after Trinity.

life. If you, for instance, who lately deserved a harsh name, are notwithstanding truly a *penitent*, your condition may be soon rendered as far more desirable than that of the first and greatest of mankind, who are *impenitent*, as eternity exceeds *time*, or the *highest happiness*, the *greatest misery*. But remember the more *sincere* you are, the more *charitable* you ought to be in your *opinions of others*.

We often act as if the *time to come* were not of the same nature as the *time past*; but whether it glides in *pleasure*, or labors on in *pain*, it will soon be gone. But *eternity*!—" *Thou pleasing dreadful thought!*" Who would forfeit thy joys for *millions of worlds*! Who would suffer thy *torments* for all those worlds can give, were we exempt from *sickness*, *poverty* and *pain*, the *pangs of sorrow*, or the *ravages of time*! But being, as we all are, inheritors of so many *evils*, let us rejoice that our reason walks hand in hand as the *constant faithful friend and companion of faith*, and draws us, as it were by *links of adamant*, *constraining* us to fall down and *adore* the hand that gave it, resigning our *wills* to him whence all *counsel and reflexion* spring!

Thus you may perceive, that so far from giving yourself up as *lost*, HOPE is at once your duty, your *happiness*, and your *remedy*: and if your heart is *sincere*, you may build it on a *rock*, which is secured by the *arm of omnipotence*. Hope will cease with enjoyment: Faith will be absorbed in the fruition of bliss: but *charity* will *endure for ever*! The love of God and men is the completion

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pletion of all human happiness, both here and hereafter ; for though it may differ essentially in degree, the joys of heaven will probably consist in it. But if we do not possess this charity, so as to receive joy and comfort in it *here*, is it to be presumed that we *shall*, or that we *can*, in the nature of things, be *capable* of it *hereafter*, or consequently that we *can be happy* ? And if we are *not happy*, we must be *miserable*, for this plain reason, that the soul is *immortal* and will not perish.

Nor is *hope*, or *fear*, or *love* only concerned, in religion. *Gratitude* is one of the *strongest affections* of the *soul*, especially when it is expressed towards those who, we are sure, love us with the greatest *sincerity and truth*. How *vast* is the debt due to heaven, for the *goodness* expressed in the *redemption* of the world by the death of *Christ* ! Who can forget it, or remembering withhold their *gratitude* ?

“ ——— From the table of my memory

“ I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

“ All saws * of books, all forms, all pressures past,

“ That youth and observation copied there ;

“ And THY COMMANDMENT all alone shall live

“ Within the book and volume of my brain,

“ Unmix'd with baser matter ! ”

Yourself can best determine as to your own sincerity. Our hearts are treacherous, and we cannot easily fathom the depths
of

* Proverbs or sentences.

of our own corruption ; but there is a rule by which to pass a judgment : if you court every thing that is GOOD, which accident and your situation in life will admit of ; and fly from every thing that is EVIL, or that leads to EVIL, which accident or your situation in life may expose you to, you may readily conclude that your sincerity is acceptable in the sight of God.

Hope, when it is ill grounded, is generally called the fool's paradise : and with respect to the present part of our existence, we often find that it is vain to imagine that even conscious innocence, or the love of God and men, or the greatest services done to our fellow-creatures, will be always effectual to build our expectations upon, for favor, kindness, or even justice from the world : but it is not so with GOD ; he who knoweth all things, and judges uprightly, and certainly will reward our virtue. As hope is thus interwoven with charity, and we cannot expect a reward for nothing, we must consequently act agreeably to it.

“ — If we have hope in heav'n's

“ joys, we must make signal of that hope ! ”

No one can in reason expect, even the common supports of life, unless he speaks his wants, and uses his reason to obtain them ; and the same reason tells us, that we must implore the mercies of heaven to relieve our spiritual wants, as well as our temporal ones, not by weak-minded or trifling prayers, or by a languid indifference in our actions, but with close attention, and as if we believed,
what

what we say *we believe* ; at the same time practising that which we are commanded, because we are commanded, as well as for its own *intrinsic worth*. Mere speculative virtue is of no value. Unless you are resolute and determined to seek the *truth*, and *mercies of God through Christ*, and to shun the *falsehood* and *malignity of sin*, you can hardly entertain a *consistent hope*.

To apply *these reflexions* to your own case, for heaven's sake hasten to recover from that *lethargy of understanding*, and that *madness of heart*, under which you so lately labored. If you believe that your *soul is immortal*, cleanse it by your *prayers*, and by a *virtuous and religious life*, from the *stains* it has contracted, and humbly hope to be *happy for ever* !

Here fix your *mark* : here keep your eye *attentive*, that you may not overshoot the *haven of your rest*. The more virtuous you are, the more acceptable you will be in the sight of God. How often do we see the breast of the *great and noble* tortured even to distraction, when the humble cottager lives and dies in *comfort*. As with the health of the body, so it is with the soul : *Sleep* often

“ *Flies the canopies of costly state*

“ *Tho’ lull’d with sounds of sweetest melody,*

“ *— And leaves the kingly couch,*

“ *Yet seals the SHIP BOY’s eyes, and rocks his brains*

“ *In cradle of the rude imperious surge.”*

Such

Such is the *order of nature*, with regard to *man*, and the objects of sense; and can we hesitate a moment in believing, that the *Great Author of nature* has the *same regard to man* with respect to the *moral world*; and will give *rest everlasting* to the *virtuous soul*, when landed in the regions on the other side the grave!

Happy shall I be, if you give these considerations their *due weight*, and enter into the *true spirit* of them, that I may be assistant in promoting your felicity, for I believe it will be an *unspeakable* advantage to myself, if by this means I can be instrumental to your acceptance with God, when you shall be arraigned and appear before the throne of your tremendous judge; who with more than angelic sweetness may pronounce this sentence, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant!*" — God preserve you! *I am your very true friend.*

On prudential Conduct, Moderation, Reading and Industry.

LETTER XVIII.

To the same.

WHEN you consider the nature of this charity, you must be sensible, that the more objects are relieved, the greater will be the *merit* of it. Those who are *sincere* should lose no time in qualifying themselves for *both worlds* : and upon the same principle, those who are *not sincere* act as enemies to the design, whilst they practise a miserable deceit on themselves. She who overlooks or abuses the intent of this truly pious undertaking, and *artfully* conceals her real thoughts, may *deceive* her friends, but the *consequences* will fall heavy on her *own* soul.

No person of common sense, much less a *christian*, can imagine, but that great *commiseration* ought to be shown to people in your circumstances, and particularly by yourselves towards each other ; but still nothing material in relation to *moral* or *religious deportment* should be concealed from the proper persons who are to judge of the nature of offences. This may appear as a *hard lesson*, but in its consequences it will be the highest act of mercy. You will show so much the *greater tenderness* to your companions in general : you will keep them so much the more

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in awe, as to outward *conduct*; and an *inward purity*, and sense of religion will be acquired so much the sooner. You will also add to the *reputation* of this charity, and so far be yourself a contributor towards the support of it. You may easily conceive that every one that leaves the house as a *true and sincere penitent*, will advance the interest of it. The whole undertaking is of too serious a nature to admit of any *disguise*; and as it is more easy to *prevent* an evil than to *cure* it, I therefore put *you* on your guard. To know *when we are well*, requires a good share of understanding: and it is impossible that *domestic peace and harmony* can be built on any other stable foundation, than the solid truths and practice of christianity. To seek for *repentance*, where there is no *contrition*, is just as absurd as to *compel* people to be religious. A *desire* to repent is one great step towards *repentance*; but she who has no design to *repent*, must be ever *acting a part*, no less injurious to her companions than to herself.

Considering the *numberless infirmities of human nature*, the only rule of conduct suitable to it, is to overcome *evil* with *good*, and to *compassionate* what we cannot *cure*. But when christianity steps in, and confirms this great truth, it demands our most religious zeal and *attention*.

Good manners is also essential to *peace*; and those who have most *breeding*, will certainly give the best proofs of it. The natural tendency of great familiarity is to create contempt: but in such a house, calculated for such great and noble ends, peace and harmony are as essential as

air. Prudence, as well as religion, demands of us to overlook and disregard many kinds of idle words, in our own *particular case*; but with regard to the general œconomy of such a house as this, such words must be *carefully suppressed*, even though they should not happen to be of a *malignant* kind; for *repentance* can have no *life* where *concord* is not the *animating principle*.

Whoever utters *indecent* and *reproachful* words, or relates stories, whether *true* or *false*, to create *uneasiness*, should also know that she acts like an *enemy* to the *charity*; renders herself unworthy the mercy intended; and you may be assured, if she persists she will not find any protection in the house; I mean, that she will not be *permitted to remain in it*.

There is another fault which too often prevails in the world: indeed it deserves the name of a *crime*; I mean *HYPOCRISY*. Deceit is the characteristic of the *father of lies*, and too many of those who have forsaken the *guide of their youth*, whether it arises most from that *wickedness* which has estranged their hearts from *God*; or from a habit of *artful tenderness* to captivate the partners of their *iniquity*, you know *too well* they are generally given to *lying* and *hypocrisy*. These crimes are *abominable* in their own nature, but they receive a *blackier* hue from the shade that is cast on them, under the umbrage of *pretended sanctity*.

In all cases we must judge with *candor*, and exercise our *reason*. We must accommodate ourselves to *truth*, for truth will never *bend* to our depravity. Remember
the

the *nature* of your own situation, and what belongs to you as professing to *love peace*; that *peace*, which *religion* only can give. This is the *object* which I earnestly recommend to you, for your *daily consideration*, and as the subject of your *daily talk*: and it is this which will render you amiable in the sight of that *GOD*, whose *mercies* you supplicate, and on whose *protection* you have thus *wisely* thrown yourself. Act therefore a *consistent* part: do *honor* to *yourself*, and to your *friends*, that you may not reproach yourself with *folly* and *ingratitude*, in addition to your *former sins*, and, without any necessity, plunge yourself into *further distress*.

With regard to matters of instruction, as you *read well*, perhaps you may be called upon to assist others. There are many strong reasons for learning to *read well*, at least *agreeably*. A good utterance is a great improvement of *common speech*; and a recommendation to the favor of the world. If it is a shame to neglect an opportunity of addressing ourselves to God, it certainly is not less so, to neglect one of the necessary *means* of learning *our duty* to him; and you may observe, that the *governors of this charity* are always mindful that those who cannot read at all, should be taught. *Ignorance* has involved many in their *present distress*, and it may be hoped that the removal of that *ignorance*, will remove the *distress*. This can hardly be done so properly and effectually, as by *reading*, that the parties may *know* how to *employ such of their hours*, as become *dangerous*; for that *very time*, which is more valuable than all the gold of *Brazil*,

Brazil, or the silver of *Peru*, when it becomes *burthen-
some* to us, is generally *abused*, and too often converted
to the *vilest purposes*. We shall hardly practise what we
do not *know*; nor can we know *what is right* till we are
instructed. There are certain rules by which we must re-
gulate life, if we mean to be happy; and it is more than
probable we shall *observe* them, and conduct our lives the
better, on account of reading. Thus in every view *read-
ing* is necessary in all ranks of life.

You are now *happy* in having time to think seriously.
Now is your opportunity to subdue *bad habits*, and to ac-
quire *good ones*: if you lose this occasion, which the *in-
dulgence of heaven* has bestowed upon you, as it were by
a *miracle*, what can you expect hereafter? You are sen-
sible that the design of this charity is to save you, and
many such unhappy persons from *infamy, disease, and un-
timely death*: to habituate the *outcast* of the earth to *use-
ful industry*, and by giving them the fairest opportunity
of *repentance*, administer to the *saving their souls*.

As you have *parents and friends*, I hope they will not
be less forward in the great duties of *christianity* to their
own blood; than *strangers* have been to you, on the *common
principles of humanity and religion*. Those who are not so
happy as to have any parents alive, or none that can be
of use to them, must make themselves friends. Let them
do their duty to *GOD*, and their *neighbor*, and Providence
will never forsake them.

There are many good people in the world, who *confi-
der* the various calamities of human life, and will give

shelter to the wretched, when these forsake their evil ways, and solicit the mercy of heaven. But as we grievously load our account of guilt, when we offend in a fond presumption that we shall one day *repent*, and be accepted by *God*; so we transgress on all the rules of *common prudence*, if we flatter ourselves, that, tho' wicked, we shall receive favor and protection from *mankind*.

As to the *women* who are discharged from the *Magdalan House*, if the thought of *future bliss* and *misery* truly affects them, they will be enabled to trust themselves again in the world; but I hope they will remember, that the united force of *prudence* and *religion* will not be more than a match for the temptations, which they may meet.

For your own part, you see I am *your friend*; take heed to your ways. If you transgress, and are discharged, hence there can be no admittance again into *this house*; and *God* knows what admittance you will find in any other, except such as lead to the mansions of perdition, which is infinitely worse than all the other distresses you can suffer, *death* not excepted.

Your *brother* often enquires after you, and I am glad that I can give him so good an account. Be assured that so long as you behave well, you will engage the attention of your friends. FAREWEL.

On Gratitude, as essential to Religion.

L E T T E R X I X .

To the same.

ABOVE all things, let me recommend to you to be *grateful*. There is no virtue which can afford you so much pleasure as *gratitude* *; and you may be assured, that as no satisfaction can be greater than to improve your *understanding*, and correct your *affections*, nothing will render you more amiable in the sight of *God* and *men*. If you consider it with respect to the *common events of life*, it will lead you into the *paths of peace*: the obligation to it is *eternal* and *immutable*: it includes *humility* and *submission*; and as *religion* ought to influence us in the *first* place, and above all other things, it seems to imply a contradiction, to be *grateful to man*, and *ungrateful to God*.

We make rejoycings at a victory which we obtain over our enemies, who would reduce us to a *dependance* on them, though they cannot subdue the *unconquerable* mind; shall we not rejoice more exceedingly at our *victory over sin*, which would plunge our souls into *slavery* and *everlasting* misery? We carefs a *general*, by whose *prudence*

H h 2

and

* See Gratitude, &c. Vol. 1. page 115.

and *military virtue* such victory was obtained ; we acknowledge our obligations to him ; we give him our very *hearts* : shall not those *hearts* be grateful to the *Great Captain* of our *salvation*, who conquered our *greatest enemy*, and at length, as a proof of his *LOVE*, laid down his life for our *sakes* ? As our *Sovereign*, our *Lawgiver*, and our *Judge*, he has commanded us to *remember his precepts*. As our *mighty Saviour and Redeemer*, he has appointed *peculiar rites*, in remembrance of his death, until his coming again in *glory* ; can you forget the service, or withhold the tribute of your thanks for such *inestimable benefits* ?

Think closely. Reason is as much reason in *religious*, as in *worldly concerns*. With regard to common affairs, we are sometimes called ungrateful, as if our *minds* were *perverse*, when the cause arises from our *affections* being *dull* and *languid*, or our *judgments* weak in discerning the favor done us. When we owe an obligation to great numbers, and our *affections* are expanded, their rays are apt to be lost : but *gratitude* is not the less gratitude, because I receive a favor from the hands of *many* : I am then *obliged to many* ; that is, to every one whom I know to be concerned in the *favor* ; but more particularly to those who have the *immediate direction* of the kindness I receive. If this kindness should happen to be over-rated by my *benefactor*, that may be *his fault*, but I will not therefore, *for my own sake*, suppress my *sense* of the obligation. But if only a *proper regard* is expected and required, it is an injury to *human society* to withhold it. *Ingratitude* is a *monster* which ought to be *hunted out of all society*.

Every

Every one has not the *gift of words* to express their thanks in suitable terms ; but to be *insensible* of gratitude, argues *baseness* or *stupidity*. If we consider the condition in which mankind are placed, as dependant on each other, it is but just and natural to be delighted with *good fortune*, and the prospect of *earthly felicity* : yet it must come from the *hands of men*, in some shape or other ; and is it therefore the *less pleasing* ? Is there not the highest complacency in being an object of the care of our *fellow-creatures* ?—of *whom* would we *wish* to be *beloved* ? So far from a *disgrace*, it is an earnest of the *protection of GOD*, who *directs and governs all* : and as this naturally affords great pleasure to a mind *well taught*, we should *return* the pleasure *we receive*, by doing to others all the *kindness* and *service* we can ; and in many cases the best, or only *kindness* we can show, is to let them see that we interest ourselves in *their felicity*, at the very moment that we promote our own, by acting the part *which is right*, and which they most anxiously wish to see us act.

Thus *gratitude* grows into *charity*, which is the bond of all virtues. You see there cannot be a more *pleasing* exercise to the soul ; nor is there any *virtue* that *rewards itself more highly* ; so that had it *no other reward*, any person of understanding, who considers the make of his own mind, who contemplates the *connexions* between *virtue* and *happiness*, and his dependance on *Providence*, will cherish a *grateful temper*. Not to do this is to proclaim ourselves *ignorant, base, and vile*. Let the benefit, I say, be conferred by whomsoever, *God* is the *author and giver of*

all good. Men are only his *instruments*, but we may as well pretend to love GOD *whom we have not seen*, at the very time that we *hate our brother whom we have seen*, as to pretend to express *gratitude to God*, when we have *no gratitude to men*. This seems to imply an absurdity in terms.

The good things of *this world* are apt to strike us more forcibly at first view, than those which relate to the *next*; but of all the mercies men can show to their fellow-creatures, this which is shown to you seems to be one of the *most essential*; and includes all that beneficence, which to those *who believe in the immortality of the soul*, is the one thing needful.

Consider how best to express *your gratitude*. If your affections are dull and languid, yet a sense of duty and *principle* will incline you to express it in the way most *honorable* to yourself, and most acceptable to your benefactors, whose only concern, as I have already observed, is to see you do, what is *right* for you to do.

When you sing the *thanksgiving* hymn * to the Almighty; consider it, at the same time, as an acknowledgment of the power of *gratitude* to exalt your mind. And when you leave *the house*, if you mean to express a real sense of your obligation, be *virtuous*, and remember that you cannot return to a *vicious* course without plunging yourself into the guilt of the most *enormous ingratitude to God and man*, which, tho' not punishable as such, by any human laws, is reserved for that *dreadful scene* which no pen can describe! I am, &c.

Good

* *When all thy mercies, O my God, &c.* as sung at the *Magdalene Chapel*.

Good Example. Truth and Falshood. Honesty. Slander. Temperance. Friendship. Diversions. Dancing. Dress. Company. Marriage. Jealousy. Industry. Enthusiasm. Immortality.

LETTER XX.

To the same.

SEEING how *dangerous* a thing life is, under all its advantages, and that happiness is the great object in pursuit, we must consider what will best promote that happiness with respect to the particular condition of life, in which Providence has placed us; ever carrying in our breast the deepest sense of this *great truth*, that the soul of the *peasant*, and the soul of the *king*, are of equal value in the sight of *God*. Let us do the best we can. Life is a scene of care, and *prudence* is the offspring of *experience*, especially of that experience which we learn from *distress*. You are now going into the world again, and as I cannot help considering you, in many respects, as a *daughter of my own*, I will make you the *best present* I am able.

Tho' it is more easy to *give*, than to apply good counsel, it is nevertheless one of the best things we can *receive*; the application must depend entirely on ourselves. If my precautions to you should not answer the purpose intended, the crime will be your own, and you will be so far the less

without excuse. *But I trust in God my labor will not be thrown away.*

In the *first place*, let me advise you to cast your eye upon some *living example*, where *good sense and piety, good humour and industry*, are the ruling principles of life. When you find yourself going too fast or too slow, look at the *copy* you mean to imitate. If it is not your good fortune to get at the acquaintance, or knowledge of such a character, seek for one in books, and render yourself an *original*, by a *steadfast adherence* to such principles as you adopt: and above all, consider well what the *Saviour of mankind taught and practised*.

Remember that all the *social duties of life* are *reciprocal*; and if you hope to *receive* any favor or indulgence, you must endeavor to *deserve* them, by an *obliging, an ingenuous, and sincere* behavior. Though you should be able to carry a point by *falsehood and hypocrisy*, yet if you believe in a state of *rewards and punishments after death*, you must see that you will be infinitely the loser by the bargain. The great foundation of happiness to *rational and accountable Beings*, is an *inviolable attachment to truth*. We cannot lie to the prejudice of *another*, without *malice or villainy*; nor in excuse for *ourselves*, without *guilt or cowardice*: in both cases we either propose a *direct advantage* to ourselves, or to *prevent some mischief*, but the greatest mischief and disadvantage of all is, that we are at the same moment bartering with the DEVIL for our *souls*, and throwing them away for *trifles*. This practice, at the best, generally brings on great contempt,

and we lose all *trust* and *credit*: whereas *truth* carries with it so much *dignity* and *respect*, that the very confession of a trespass establishes an opinion, that we are *sorry* for it, and that we are not guilty of any other: and that which is modestly acknowledged, is easily forgiven.

Truth in speech, or words, naturally leads to truth in *actions*; and it is impossible for a *dishonest person* to be a *faithful servant to God or man*, or to enjoy the pleasures which wait on *virtuous deeds*. Those who escape without being punished or detected, *tremble at their own thoughts*: the consciousness of guilt, and the dread of a discovery, *torment their souls* on this side the grave, unless they are totally given over and abandoned by *God himself*. But *innocence* looks up towards heaven with joy, rich in *comfort*, rich in *hope*; disdaining the thought of *dishonesty*, stands undaunted before *God and man*.

“ *She that has light within her own clear breast,*
 “ *May sit i'th' center, and enjoy bright day;*
 “ *But she that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,*
 “ *Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;*
 “ *Herself is her own dungeon.*”

I am sorry to say, there are too many *little arts* and *contrivances* practised by both sexes, of the *great* as well as the *little vulgar*. The honest beggar may disdain the conduct of a prince; and upon the same account that an *honest man* is said to be *the noblest work of God*, an *honest woman* is certainly not less so: Every thing that is right,
 just,

just, and *decorous*, cannot pass under a more amiable name than *honesty*; and to tell a *man* he is false to his word, or unjust in his dealings, or a *woman* that she is a *harlot*, cannot be expressed in stronger terms, than that they are *dishonest*.

And, alas! what *dishonest tricks* are often played off upon the noblest affections of the human soul. How often have I seen a storm of *artificial passion* shake a *female breast*, and heard sighs from the heart, as if it were breaking;

“ *Whilst waiting tears stood ready for command,*

“ *And often flow’d, to varnish a false tale.*”

In a word, the ways of being *dishonest*, are as numerous as the inventions of *hell* and the *devil*: therefore if you have heaven in your eye, and hope to get thither, wear but *one face*, though the world should burst around you. GOD IS TRUTH; and when you depart from *truth*, you depart from *God*.

Charity is the bond of society: avoid all such discourse as may *injure* others. To say all he knows is the task of an *idiot*; and to say any thing that can hurt another, is generally a proof of our depravity; and *evil* reports in the *moral*, are as storms and tempests in the *natural* world.

Never say any thing *evil* of *any one*; and this will be the surest way for *no one* to say *evil* of *you*. If you attempt to gloss over your former conduct, by railing at other *foolish*, *wicked*, or *unhappy women*, or *men*, when
your

your own conduct is not called in question, you may not only do *them* an irreparable injury, but *yourself* also. Your reputation, as well as the integrity of your heart, may both be laid waste by your own *indiscretion*. I know but of one rule, when other peoples lives are in question, which is, to be silent, if I can say *no good* of them.

That you may *never* depart from that *integrity* of mind, which I wish you, with all my soul, whatever your *future fortune* shall be, let me caution you against all kinds of *intemperance*. Food is intended for the support of our bodies, not the *gratification of our appetite*, though hunger necessarily provides *good sauce*. Sleep also is designed by nature only as a refreshment. An over indulgence in *meats, drinks, or sleep*, is destructive of the *health* of the body, and the *vigor* of the soul. For the same reason, and exactly upon the same principle, an intemperate pursuit of what is called *pleasure*, is one of the greatest evils incident to human nature, and may be justly stiled the *complaint of the times*. It is very elegantly observed, that “*we wish away whole years, and travel through time as thro’ a country filled with many wild and dreary wastes, longing to arrive at certain imaginary points of rest which are dispersed up and down in it. We fly from one object to another still restless and unsatisfied.*” By expecting a great deal more than these objects can give, we find a great deal less; and seeing that *amusements* are sometimes necessary, we are apt to think them the only thing *desirable*. In proportion as our first impressions are *wrong*, just as the first

con-

concoction of the aliments of our bodies, *indigested notions* about pleasure, breed a multitude of *ill humours*.

Of all human pursuits there is no enjoyment comparable to *virtuous friendship*, agreeable to what I have already mentioned, of the example of a *virtuous* person; but she must be *truly virtuous*, or you had far better converse with your own heart, and grow fond of your own ideas of virtue. Nothing is better calculated for the *government of the passions*, or the *improvement of the understanding*, than *friendship*, if well chosen.

Next to the *labor of our own hands*, and *heads*, in the way which Providence has pointed out to us, the entertainment derived from *pious, useful, or amusing books*, which have no tendency to *corrupt* the heart, is a perpetual source of *comfort and relief* to the mind, ever in search of action; and human nature being still the same, the *change of objects* among the *rich or poor*, is not so great as is imagined.

To advise the *ignorant*, relieve the *needy*, and comfort the *afflicted*, afford a vast field for filling up our *vacant* time. Mitigating the fierceness of anger; doing justice to injured characters; soothing the envious into pity; and gently leading those who are slaves to their prejudices into the ways of truth: these are employments suited to us as reasonable *creatures*, and to be enamoured of *any object* which *reason* cannot support, is certainly a proof that we are *going wrong*.

The duties of *filial or fraternal, connubial or parental* love, with all their various connections, should employ

ploy large portions of our time, whilst *devotion* and the government of our *passions* sanctify the whole.

In the mean while, the amusements which are *least expensive*, are not only most *durable*, but also most *solidly delightful*. *Riding*, or *walking* in fine weather, and surveying the beautiful face of the *earth*, and the *heavens*, are far more enchanting than the most brilliant court, were it adorned with *ten millions* value in *diamonds*, and a *thousand lustres*. Theatrical and musical entertainments of the most virtuous and best regulated kind, are also noble amusements: but a great fondness for them becomes a *crime*, especially if the *expence* is above our *fortunes*. CARDS to a certain degree may be permitted, but when people contract a love for them, all *thought* and *time* are laid waste, and every thing that is truly worthy, submits to the most *barbarous despotism* over the soul: and when people play for more than they can afford to lose, which happens too often, these *impliments* of amusement, are fit only for those who would pick their *neighbors pockets*, if they could do it with *impunity*.

As to *dancing*, the inhabitants of the eastern world, who best retain the original simple ideas of things, assign this employment to the lower classes of the people only; and a *great man* keeps men and women to dance before him, for his amusement, as we keep *running horses*, of *game cocks*. It would be shameful among them for any person of *condition*, or *fair fame*, to be seen *dancing*. This is *their* notion;—and what is *ours*? The poet says,

“ *What*

- “ *What is’t defends the purity of melting maids*
 “ *In courtly balls and midnight masquerades,*
 “ *Safe from the treach’rous friend, or daring spark,*
 “ *The glance by day, or whisper in the dark,*
 “ *When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,*
 “ *When music softens, and when dancing fires ? ”*

I can tell him what it is :—it is native modesty, or a sense of shame ; self-love, as expressed in prudence ; and it may be hoped, that the christian religion has some effect on professed christians. Besides, all men and women are not of the same complexion, and all places are not fit for amours. Modest resorts being well regulated are useful for amusement, for society, and for making young persons acquainted, by which marriage is promoted. But things which are warrantable to some, who have time and money to spare, and whose characters are untainted, may not be so to others ; and that which is warrantable in a certain degree and manner, is not so, if the due measure is neglected, much less are all things expedient which are warrantable. — The excess of any thing is dangerous ; and however the harmony of motion may please the most harmonized mind, the tumults and disorders of the major part of dancing meetings cannot have any good effects ; bad ones I believe they often have ; and the most innocent are in danger of being off their guard, and of dissipating their thoughts, if not ruffling them : and it seems to be a proof of this, that dancers are often intoxicated with fondness for their diversion, and, like men that love strong drink, seldom know

know when they have *enough*. They often protract their amusement beyond *all decency* in point of *hours*, both with regard to health, and their ability to discharge the duties of life the next day.

Upon the whole view of the matter, *dancing meetings* in general, *in the manner now in use*, I think do some mischief to the most *innocent*, who frequent them; and too many such meetings are *absolutely calculated for no other design than debauchery*.

Let the *gay world*, *innocent or vicious*, do as they *please*; and reconcile the *excesses*, as they *can*; I charge you, as you *shall remember the regard I show you*, and what is of *infinitely greater consequence*, as you mean to take care of *your own soul*, not to mix in any such *public assemblies*. It is more than probable *your face* will be remembered, and you will run a double risk. Your very appearance will be an *invitation to libertines*; and the notion of your being a *penitent*, or having forsaken an *evil course of life*, will only quicken their *desire*, or excite their *derision*. When time shall leave you no remains of *beauty*, you will hardly have any great inclination for such *pastime*; but whilst it lasts, if you should be in a condition of life to frequent such places, *take my advice*, and shun them. You will certainly be a *gainer* by the bargain.

If you are wise, I think you will also show your *good sense*, as well as your *repentance*, by your *dress*. Absurd *finery*, or a *flaunting dress*, seems to be a kind of *public proclamation*, that a woman is, has been, or would be, a *barlot*; which I suppose no *modest* woman would chuse.

It

It is generally considered as a *female privilege*, though when carried beyond a certain mark argues *levity* of mind, if not *corruption* of heart. Fortune-hunters of both sexes may consider *fine clothes* as essential to their success: but for a woman to throw away her soul, for a *taudry* garment, as many a *silly girl* has done, is most shocking indeed to common sense, as well as religion. O REASON, where art thou, when we give up HEAVEN, to tickle our vanity, for a moment; to be ADMIRER by ourselves, and LAUGHED at, or pitied by the rest of mankind! Need I tell you that there is any thing which can endanger your virtue more, than an indulgence of this *foible*? At best it will create great *anxiety*; but it may put you on such means of obtaining this gratification, as will render your *repentance* an abomination.

I remember the story of a *Frenchman*, who in order to distinguish himself in the sight of PETER THE GREAT, *Czar of Moscow*, appeared in a different suit of cloaths for *thirty* successive days, till at length being obliged to wear one of the same over again, the CZAR wished him *joy* that his taylor had fitted him. Such is the *little* regard which persons of sense show to dress. Our wisdom is best shown in such apparel as suits our *condition*, not *fordid*, filthy, nor *fantastic*; but *clean*, *decent*, *modest*, with such elegance as our fortunes will admit. Nor in the eye of *reason*, or genuine *taste*, is there any *beauty* in cutting as much silk into threads as will half make a gown, and being at three times the expence, upon the whole, as before this *extravagant frenchified whim* came in vogue!

What-

Whatever condition of life we are placed in, it is difficult to avoid falling sometimes into *bad company*, I mean the company of people that want sense or virtue; and you cannot be too cautious. Perhaps you will not immediately discover their *temper*, and *disposition* in particular, for in this world, most characters are of a *mixed* kind; but it is become proverbial, *to know a man by his company*, and it is hardly possible but that our manners should take some tincture from persons with whom we associate. It is the great business of those who are most anxious for the good of mankind, to correct others if they can, or to shun them if they cannot; but by no means to countenance such an intercourse, as may divert them from the pursuits, which they are convinced in their hearts, do truly constitute their *happiness*.

It will be hardly possible for you to retain your *integrity*, if you converse familiarly with the licentious of either sex; for if you should not directly lose your virtue, you will lose your *character*, which is the external part of virtue; and this being played away, and virtue itself left *unguarded*, it often follows, as if our only refuge were in *iniquity*: therefore let me entreat you, to be on your guard, and to associate only with such persons as are exemplary for *sobriety of life*, and whom you have the utmost reason to think, are *true worshippers of God*. The only way to make yourself acceptable to the *wise* and *virtuous*, is by *wisdom* and *virtue*; one essential part of which is *prudence*. *Humility*, *affability*, and a *readiness to oblige*, will also make

your company sought by them, as well as theirs acceptable to you: like naturally assimilates with like, as we see even among birds and beasts.

If you should discover, that you are *known* to have been in the *Magdalane House*; you may suppose that no person of sense, can with the least charity, draw any other conclusion, than that as you have been a *sinner*, you have *repented*, which is more than many have done, who are not known to be sinners, or have not *sinned in the same way*, and yet have great need of repentance.

True *penitence*, and a *virtuous* life, will create humility of soul: and that deportment, which is necessary to preserve the *effects* of real repentance, will engage the favor of the serious and *sensible part of mankind*: *others* must be kept at a distance, by that conduct which always carries with it respect and awe, when a woman is *really virtuous*, and desires to remain so. But if neither this, nor the authority of *superiors* prevails, *prudence* requires a total separation from such persons as turn the grace of God into *foolishness*. Those who scoff at repentance in others, will hardly ever repent of their own sins.

If you should be so fortunate as to *marry* a man who is totally ignorant of your story, it will be as *imprudent* to trust him with it, as it may be, to deny it, should you unluckily be challenged; since what you *have been*, is nothing to what *you are*. In either case, let your deportment be so unexceptionably *modest*, that you may not give the least occasion of *offence*: but in the last instance

do

do not allow yourself any of those freedoms in discourse with men, which in common life are termed *jocose*.

The depravity of mankind have introduced a great degree of misery into that state, which, if properly treated, is the *most happy*, because the *most agreeable to our social affections*. Use yourself to consider every kind of secret practice, or *deceitful carriage*, as real iniquity. *Without love*, marriage is but a dull kind of contract; and *with* it there is frequently some mixture of that passion or turn of mind, which for want of a better word, is called *jealousy*. Tho' weak-minded or suspicious persons, are generally alarmed upon the most trifling incidents, where their love is most sincere; yet where there is a due portion of good sense, on the part of the *husband* or *wife*, to correct this turn of mind, it rather cements the bond by a mutual care of each other's safety, and fans the lambent flame, than extinguishes the fire of love. In any case, if judgment is wanting on both sides, *love* will grow into *disquiet*, if not *disgust*; and there are but few steps between *indifference* and *aversion*. If you are *wife*, consider the care and attention which your husband may show, as a prudent solicitude for your preservation; and not as *jealousy*, to excite your resentment.

Our *frailties* being common, so ought to be our *forgiveness*; and where love is, there can be no room for *malice*, much less for *revenge*. Even *occasional* anger generally falls on our own heads; therefore let *chearfulness* and *tendernefs*, with an open and obliging carriage, secure the heart of the man, whom Providence, in mercy to your *state and condition*, shall give you. Let the *sim-*

plicity of your manners, and the *integrity* of your life, be such, that he may not have the least temptation to depart from his love for you, if he is a man with *human affections*: and I hope *you* will never depart from the *love of God*, whatever your husband may be: for even *unkindness to you*, can be no reason for your *unkindness to yourself*; or, in other words, for your throwing off those ties to virtue, which are just the same, whether he be *good* or *bad*: for this, like other evils, can be considered only as a *trial* of virtue.

Let your *industry* keep pace with your *love*, that *want* may not create any temptation to abandon your own principles, with respect to *God* or your *husband*.

Though young in sin, knowing what iniquity is, you should be doubly cautious of the conduct of your own children, if you should have any. You know how the world is beset with *evils*; and whatever rank or condition you are in, your obligations to virtue can never be changed.

As you may possibly incline to extremes in *piety*, let me caution you to avoid every thing that is *enthusiastic* or *superstitious*. I have given you my thoughts already, that if you offer to God the incense of a *virtuous life*, your prayers will be accepted by him. To consider yourself as under his care, will be a sure source of *joy* and *comfort*. Remember that your actions are marked down in his book, and it will awe your conduct, and keep you from offending him. Love virtue for its own charms; and love it more for the happiness which it promises. Let no *raving preacher*, who thunders damnation in your ears, draw from

from you, your *money*, your *time*, or your *tears*. Be *steady* and *attentive* to what the scriptures, and your *parish minister* shall teach you. Think what you ought *to do*, and *do it*; what you ought *not to do*, and *shun it*: and call to heaven for the *mercy of God*, *which endureth for ever*!

I have now only to recommend to you the frequent consideration of that, which no mortal should ever forget. Be constant in your *addresses to God in public, and private*: read the scriptures with equal *constancy, sincerity, and care*; and think of your own *immortality*. — You know that the day is coming on, when even this goodly frame the world will *dissolve*; and

“ *Like the baseless fabrick of a vision,*

“ *Leave not a wreck behind!* ”

How much more these frail tenements, *our bodies*, which every blast of wind is apt to disorder. Be *confidently assured* that the *soul* will never die:

“ *The stars shall fade away; the sun himself*

“ *Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years:*

“ *But this will flourish in immortal youth,*

“ *Unhurt, amidst the wars of elements,*

“ *The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds!* ”

Think of these things every day of your life; and so long as you are *virtuous*, I will be your *very true friend*.

FAREWEL.

The great Advantages of Chastity and an innocent Life.

LETTER XXI.

To the same.

I Have yet to add a few admonitions in relation to those fallacious arguments, which are often made use of to seduce the unwary. Though you have known the *deceitfulness of sin* in some disguises; you can hardly be acquainted with it, in all its forms.

In every struggle of your heart, with respect to what is generally denominated the *good things* of this world, which are so much coveted, *remember* that neither *faith*, *hope*, nor *charity*, depend on wealth: that *temperance*, *chastity*, and *fortitude* often depend on an humble fortune, but wealth is never essential to the support of those virtues. *Justice*, *meekness*, and *mercy*, have also no greater connexion with *riches* than with *poverty*; since we often see *poor just men*, and *opulent villains*. Therefore in every view, you will discover, that *food* and *raiment*, and such things as are *necessary to your well-being*, are *sufficient to your virtue*; and that *virtue* is your supreme felicity. Lay this down as an *invariable principle*, and adhere to it with all your heart, and all your soul, even as you are *sincere* in your love of God.

“ Short

- “ *Short is the course of ev’ry lawless pleasure ;*
 “ *GRIEF, like a shade, on all its footsteps waits,*
 “ *Scarce visible in JOY’s meridian height ;*
 “ *But downwards, as its blaze declining speeds,*
 “ *The dwarfish shadow to a giant spreads.*

Too oft you’ve heard base tongues profane the name

- “ *Of sacred virtue, and yet promise pleasure*
 “ *In lying songs of vanity and vice !*
 “ *From virtue sever’d, pleasure phrenzy grows*
 “ *The gay delirium of a feverish mind,*
 “ *And always flies at reason’s cool return.*

- “ *Alike from LOVE’s and PLEASURE’s path they stray,*

Who vain and foolish, blindly seek them out :

- “ *Their pleasure riot, lust their boasted love.*
 “ *Capricious, wanton, bold, and brutal lust*
 “ *Is meanly selfish, when resisted, cruel ;*
 “ *And, like the blast of pestilential winds,*
 “ *Taints the sweet bloom of nature’s fairest forms.*
 “ *How low sinks BEAUTY when by vice debas’d ?*
 “ *How fair her form when virtue dwells within ? ”*

If you are *wise*, you will soon find the difference between what is truly *pleasant* to you, as a *rational* and *accountable Being*, and what is necessary to that which is called a *pleasurable life*. The one will give you relief, as a *fountain of living water* will satisfy your thirst : the other, whilst it diverts the *present moments* of those who have the means of such pleasure in their hands, leaves them dissatisfied and *restless*, tossed about

by a *feverish will*, in danger of being *wrecked* and losing all happiness: and those who have not such means, what can *they* expect but misery? On the other hand remember that

“ *The virtuous mind that ever walks attended*

By her true friend and guardian, CONSCIENCE,

“ *May welcome PURE-EY'D FAITH, WHITE-*

“ *HANDED HOPE,*

“ *Those hov'ring angels, girt with golden wings!*

“ *And thou unblemish'd form of CHASTITY!*

“ *And HE, the supreme good (t' whom all things ill*

“ *Are but as slavish officers of vengeance)*

Is always ready, with indulgent care

To keep our lives and honor uninsnar'd.

“ *But beauty, like the fair HESPERIAN tree,*

“ *Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard*

“ *Of dragon watch, with uninchanting eye,*

“ *To save her blossoms and defend her fruit,*

“ *From the rash hand of bold incontinence.*

“ *————— For when vile lust*

“ *By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,*

“ *But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,*

“ *Lets in defilement to the inward parts,*

“ *The soul grows clotted by contagion,*

“ *Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose*

“ *The divine property of her first being.*

But she that's chaste, and free from pride, or bold
Presumption, is clad in complete steel,

And

And virtue stands by her own vote absolv'd,
 " Nor asks an echo from the tongues of men,
 " To tell what hourly to herself she proves.
 " Who wants his own, no other praise enjoys ;
 " His ear receives it as a fulsome tale,
 " To which his heart in secret gives the lye :
 " Nay, slander'd innocence must feel a peace,
 " An inward peace, which flatter'd guilt ne'er knew."

We have here the most nervous expressions, in poetical language, of the malignant effects of giving ourselves up to such commerce as *divine laws* forbid, and at the same time the *highest praises* of the joys of a virtuous life. As to human laws, they can only discountenance this practice, for it is evidently above their reach in most instances : but since *pleasure* is the object sought, and *true pleasure* is not forbidden by GOD or men, learn where to look for such pleasure.

" Not on beds of fading flowers,
 " Shedding soon their gaudy pride ;
 " Nor with swains in SYREN bowers,
 " Will true pleasure 'ere reside.
 " On awful VIRTUE's hill sublime,
 " Enthroned sits th' IMMORTAL FAIR,
 " Who wins her height, must patient climb,
 " The steps are peril, toil, and care.
 " So from the first did heav'n ordain
 " Eternal blifs for transient pain.—

" In

“ *In the realms of peace above,*
 “ *In the source of heav’nly love,*
 “ *Where tuneful angels in a glitt’ring ring,*
 “ *To the celestial lyre’s eternal string,*
 “ *Patient VIRTUE’s triumph sing.*”

The time is drawing near, if it is not already come, when this *great truth* will appear to you in the strongest point of view; you have reason to believe it already. Though sense and imagination may represent things under disguise, and try to cheat us by bribing even *reason* to plead their cause; yet *vice* and *virtue* will ever be at variance, as much as *misery* and *happiness*. I make no doubt but you have heard *libertines* contend for their indulgences, upon the *plausible* pretence of following *nature*: they say, as the poet expresses it,

“ ————— *If all the world,*
 “ *Should in a pet of temp’rance, feed on pulse,*
 “ *Drink the CLEAR STREAM, and nothing wear but*
 “ *FRIZE,*
 “ *Th’ Allgiver would be unthank’d, would be unprais’d,*
 “ *Not half his riches known, and yet despis’d:*
 “ *And we should serve him as a grudging master,*
 “ *As a penurious niggard of his wealth,*
 “ *And live like nature’s bastards, not her sons,*
 “ *Who would be quite surcharg’d with her own weight,*
 “ *And strangle with her waste fertility.*”

The answer to such kinds of reasoning is obvious to a child; but there are some things intelligible to the innocence
 and

and simplicity of childhood, which the *corrupted* heart of man cannot comprehend, or will not see. No :

- “ Let us not charge most innocent nature
 “ As if she would her children should be riotous
 “ With her abundance. She, good caterefs,
 “ Means her provision only to the good,
 “ That live according to her sober laws,
 “ And holy dictate of spare temperance.
 “ If ev’ry just man, that now pines with want,
 “ Had but a mod’rate and befitting share
 “ Of that which lewdly pamper’d LUXURY,
 “ Now heaps upon some few, with vast excess,
 “ Nature’s full blessings would be well dispens’d
 “ In unsuperfluous, even proportion *,
 “ And she no whit encumber’d with her store;
 “ And then the GIVER wou’d be better thank’d,
 “ His praise due paid. For swinish gluttony
 “ Ne’er looks to heav’n, amidst his gorgeous feast,
 “ But with besotted base ingratitude
 “ Crams and blasphemes his feeder.” —

Behold a fair lesson, as it were written in characters of gold, engraved on plates of adamant, how nearly the virtues of *chastity*, *temperance*, and *mercy* to the distressed, unite their force; and whilst they combine to make us happy here, prepare the way to everlasting joys! Once more
FAREWEL.

Under

* The poet here only means to correct false reasoning, and check luxury or vicious excess; not a communion of worldly goods, which the state of the world will by no means admit of.

Under a Suspicion that the Party, though reconciled to her Parents, was not steady.

L E T T E R XXII.

To ———

IT must be a *new* subject of reflection to you, that there should be any care taken to preserve a sense of religion on a *woman's* mind, with a view to preserve her from pollution, when so many are eager to gratify their vicious desires at the expence of every thing that is valuable to her: but you may be assured, that the same good Providence, which snatched you out of the jaws of *destruction*, will preserve you, if you do your part. I hope that a habit of *piety* and *industry*, though it is but of a *few weeks*, joined to a just remembrance of your former misery, will heal the wounds made in your soul, during the time in which you wore the *shackles of folly* and *iniquity*. And the same *merciful God*, to the obedience of whose laws you profess to be returned, will support you in the *world*, as well as he has done in this *retirement*, if you are sincere in imploring his assistance, and use the means which *reason* and *religion* point out.

You have heard *several sermons* upon the subject of your *salvation*: you have been often upon your knees in *public prayer* to supplicate the forgiveness of your sins; you have

have had *private* devotions also, and read religious *books*; but all this will vanish *like a dream*, unless you take a *firm* and *vigorous* resolution to shun every temptation to the sin which you have repented of. If you mean to do this effectually, you must avoid all your *evil companions*: unless you intend to give up yourself as a play-game to those, who, under the disguise of friendship, meditate your destruction, you must not come within the poison of their tongues; you may be again infected by their pernicious *counsel*, and *example*, but I fear you will not bring them over to a due sense of their own *sad condition*: therefore, -if you have any regard for your own *soul*, fly from them as your most *inveterate* enemies.

There have been persons, I presume, the love of whom might have induced you to throw yourself *between them and a dagger directed at their breast*. Now think of *your own safety*, and *guard yourself*. Arm your heart with *resolution in your own defence*; not from a dagger, which can only destroy *your body*, but from those sins which will destroy *your soul*. You cannot suppose but that the *soul* will exist after death, as certainly as the *body* now exists. You believe there is a *God*, and a *state of rewards and punishments after death*; consequently you must believe that the soul is immortal. You acknowledge that the *Son of God* died on the cross to redeem you from your sins; but you cannot be so *weak*, so extremely *stupid*, as to imagine, that such a *belief*, or such a *redemption* will avail you, if you return to the practice of sin. Do not expect it: the thing is *impossible*. *Repentance* is the absolute condition

dition of *forgiveness*; and without *virtus*, what hope, or what title can you have to *mercy*?

Remember that the *dye* is thrown: there is *no retreating*: you must *conquer* or *perish*. If you are not *happy* in a future state, you must be *miserable* in that state; not for *days* or *years*; but, terrible as the thought is, even *for ever*—under that *punishment*, which those must suffer, *who wantonly throw away their souls*! So it appears from the concurrent voice of all the *christian world*. And as the possession of the whole earth cannot afford so much joy as the consideration of *immortal bliss*, if you *do your duty*; neither can the utmost extent of earthly misery, create so much *sorrow*, if you disregard it.

The horse which rushes into the battle, insensible of danger, can *only die*; his *being* terminates with his *life*: but man is made for *eternity*, and will exist *for ever*! He is made a little lower than the *angels* of heaven, and is appointed the heir of *everlasting happiness*. Yet if you suffer your *reason* to sleep, and give yourself up a prey to your *appetites*, or *foolish imaginations*, you will certainly be disinherited; you will not only *forfeit* your happiness, but be miserably *undone for ever*! If you resolve to throw care aside, and not consider at all what *account* you shall give of *yourself*, how will it fare with you, when the *great day of reckoning comes*? *How near your last day is*, GOD only knows: *far off it cannot be*; *fools only think their end at a great distance*.

The paths of virtue always require *vigilance* and *caution*. I hope you have strength sufficient to walk in it.

You

You will soon find *comfort* and *pleasure*, far beyond the momentary transports of *lewdness* and *debauchery*, could you enjoy them under all the advantages of *health* and *plenty*; but you know from *sad experience* in your own person, and in the person of many others, that the ways of vice are full of *thorns*, and lead to *poverty* and *disgrace*, *contempt* and *infamy*: and so certain as they create pains of *body*, those who die in their sins, will plunge their *souls* into torment! And as to *your particular case*, I have no words to express the *horror* which my heart feels, at this moment, at the very thought of such *complicated ingratitude* against *God*, and against your *fellow-creatures*, as your return to vice would be, after such a *deliverance* as you have had.

For my own part, I shall think myself happy as a *man*, and as a *christian*, as well as a *governor of this charity*, if I can make an impression on your heart: and because I esteem the being a *christian* a much higher honor than any the *world* can confer on me, I wish that you should be of the same mind; and therefore I entreat you, for *heaven's sake*, to be cautious how you proceed. I am yours, &c.

Under

Under the same Suspicions of the Integrity of the Party.

LETTER XXIII.

To the same.

ANXIOUS for your safety, and *suspicious* of your designs, I take an opportunity *once more* to remind you of your *danger*. If you think that I mean your happiness : if you believe I am *capable* of discovering truths level to every common capacity, *such truths* as are clear as the sun at noon day, to every one whose heart is not totally estranged from God : if, I say, you will do me this common justice, who am ready to do much for you ; attend to what I say. — Tremble, O earth, and weep, O heavens, at the perdition of a human soul ! Do you not tremble at the thought of returning into the habitations of death, and of lifting yourself among those who are at war with heaven ?

I would now plead *your cause*. — If you *think* at all, concerning the *being of a God*, and a state of *rewards* and *punishments* after death, you must *conclude*, that if you do not *enjoy* the one, you must *suffer* the other, and were your heart as hard as *adamant*, you would feel *some restraint*. My obedience to the Great Lord of heaven and earth, who now awakens my heart to a sense of *your misery*, calls upon

me

me to exercise my *charity* towards you. — My *earnest desire* to do an acceptable service to the *God* whom I adore, engages me to become an *advocate* for YOU, to your own heart; to that, and the scriptures only can I appeal, with any hopes of success.

The *New Testament* is the sacred record of *christianity*: we are taught, and most clearly informed in that book, that no fornicator, adulterer, or unclean person shall enter into the kingdom of heaven! Where then shall they enter, for their souls are immortal, as well as the chaste and faithful servants of God? They must go to hell!—they will perish everlastingly.

Custom may render iniquity familiar to those who are hackneyed in the ways of it, and their hearts may grow callous: but they must see and confess this terrible and tremendous truth. If they consent to such an abuse of their reason, that heaven cries out for vengeance; what can they expect, but to suffer that vengeance; even the wrath of an offended God,

- “ In bottomless perdition? there to dwell
 “ In adamantine chains and penal fire,
 Most dreadful habitation, fraught with fire
 “ Unquenchable: the house of woe and pain,
 “ Rolling for ever in the fiery gulph;
 “ Reserved still for wrath; where the dread thought
 “ Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments; where LUCIFER, and his curs'd train

- “ *Do witness huge affliction and dismay,*
 “ *Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate :*
 “ *Viewing, as far as angels ken can reach*
 “ *The dismal situation, waste and wild ;*
 “ *A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,*
 “ *As one great furnace, flames ; yet from those flames*
 “ *No light, but rather darkness visible,*
 “ *Serving to discover sights of woe,*
 “ *Regions of sorrows, doleful shades, where PEACE*
 “ *And REST can never dwell ; HOPE never comes,*
 “ *That comes to all ; but TORTURE without end*
 “ *Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed*
 “ *With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.*
 “ *There floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,*
 Alternate rage with poignant bitter pains
 “ *Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce !”*

View this *description* with attention !—the poet has drawn it from the scriptures : still it conveys but a faint idea of the *torments of hell* ; for we are told that we cannot conceive its full extent, more than the tongue can express, or heart conceive, the *transporting joys* reserved for the *just*. Perhaps from the nature of our depravity, it is more easy to form *ideas of torment*, than it is of *bliss*, and it requires a very *religious* turn of mind, to exalt our souls to a true idea of *spiritual joy*.

In the mean while, nothing can be more familiar to our comprehension than this ; that if we defile our bodies the *temple of the soul*, we shall lose the protection of the *Lord of life*,

life, who has built these temples, and whose eyes cannot behold any defilement in them.

If your mother, whose piety you so much commend, will burst with indignation, or expire with the anguish of a bleeding heart, if you go astray again; what do you think will be the anger and resentment of the Great Parent of mankind, whose laws are so clear in the point in question? You once had a sense of generous pride: look back, and consider what a tragic scene it is, to become the victim of the vicious desires of men, with many of whom you once thought it disgraceful even to exchange a word. — Blush, O modesty! — For heaven's sake consider what steps you take! Consider what belongs to yourself as a woman, not devoid of understanding; as a rational creature, who consults the care of her health, and her own preservation, as to this life: and as an accountable Being, what it is to live for ever in bliss, or torment!

Have you the soul of a Briton? — Your father, who professed arms, would have shed his blood with pleasure in defence of the freedom of his fellow-subjects. Will you give up yourself, as the most base and vile of slaves? Will you subject yourself to the most cruel tyranny, and sell yourself to the father of lies, and the prince of darkness?

Do not cheat yourself into a false principle. If no woman can answer it to be a common prostitute; can any woman answer it to live in a state of prostitution in any manner? Whether the circumstances be more or less favorable, she is a mercenary harlot who prostitutes herself for hire. And she who does it from inclination, cannot plead po-

erty, but *inclination* only. Though in the common notion of mankind, in the last case, the crime is extenuated, it is a great mistake, unless we suppose that *inclination to vice* is a better excuse, than *necessity* arising from *extreme poverty*. Evils of both these kinds sometimes happen, before the offenders are well aware of what they are about; but when they *see* them; when they *experience* the *malignant effects*; when their *eyes are opened* to behold their *offences against God*; when they are *conscious* that they are flying from all the *heart-felt joys* of innocence, and all *domestic comforts*; if they have any just sense of *pleasure or pain*, and think there is a *heaven or hell*, is not this conduct *horrible*, even to *madness*! O rather wish for an *honorable grave*, and *patiently* suffer, under the severities of the *hardest labor*, than submit to such *crimes*, such indignities, such dreadful punishments!

A little *resolution* to work with your hands, for a *support*, will secure you from these *mighty evils*. If your heart, as I strongly suspect, leans to your former course of life, and yet you *believe in Christ*; act as if *your reason* had not *quite* forsaken you; consider what your indispensable obligations, as a *christian*, are; and how you are taught to pray against *temptation*.

This world has no terrors to *good minds*: if you are *virtuous*, all will be well. If you appeal to heaven, God will be *merciful*: he will certainly be *mindful* of you! — You have often seen the *vicious* agonizing in *distress* of *body and soul*; but did you ever see the *virtuous* forsaken of God? Tried they often are; and without trial there can be no
great

great virtue ; but they are never forsaken. Do not distrust the Providence of God ! His mercies, and loving kindnesses, are infinite ! Arm your breast with patience, as with triple steel ! Do your endeavors, I am sure you will obtain a comfortable support ; and as an earnest of future joys, will receive a present consolation, which the most successful wickedness can never give.

Let me therefore still urge you, as your friend, to be watchful, not to deceive your own soul ; nor under any false and absurd reasoning, league with the DEVIL against yourself. Piety and industry, with an obliging behavior, will recommend you to your father, to a good husband, a master, or a mistress, or a faithful friend : and though it should be your lot to act in an humble condition of life, be assured from me, and I know what the world is, you will find comfort and ease in honest labor, and your glass will run out with satisfaction. And what moments of rest can you enjoy, if you receive the wages of iniquity, which are sure and certain indeed, but it is in the destruction which they will bring upon you.

Be not deceived by any false appearances : if you think only how to gratify the pride and vanity of your heart, at all events, or to live at your ease in the world, as if there was no other Being but the present, you cannot serve HIM faithfully who made the world, and has appointed for us in our different stations, such employments as are best suited to our wants, and those stations. Be dutiful to your Great Parent ; be faithful to the God of your life, and

the Redeemer of your soul, the rest will follow of course; you will *live* and *die* in peace, and most assuredly be received into those mansions of joy, where *pleasure* flows for ever in *immortal streams* !

Learn from the *treatment* you have met here, to be kind and merciful to others, upon their repentance, be their *trespasses* ever so great. It is upon these conditions you ask *forgiveness* of GOD. See therefore, and behold the *solid*, the *intrinsic worth* of *christianity*, in the *benevolence* which it excites; in the *resignation* which it recommends; in the *forgiveness* which it ensures; in the *joys* which it promises, when we comply with the *conditions* of *mercy*.

Gratitude for the *compassion* shown you, when you most needed it, and the *present indulgence* of your father, call on you in such *persuasive* terms, that if you do really turn a deaf ear to all these *offers of mercy*, and *fire* should issue from the earth to consume you, though it would be a subject of *sorrow* and *amazement* to all the *christian world*, yet it could not appear but as an *act of divine justice*, which *men* and *angels* would approve !

I hope you will think *seriously* of these matters, and not leave your *parents*, who are now ready to receive you, till they are satisfied of your being well accommodated in life. You will hardly find many marks of such *zeal*, as you have experienced here: but you may be sure the *virtuous* part of mankind in general, will always be more *truly*, and more *steadily* your friends, than those whose *trade is to deceive*, and who deal in *misery* and *destruction*.

Heaven

Heaven grant, that you may never forsake yourself, and I am confident if you obey GOD he will never forsake you! FAREWEL.

Magdalane House, 8ber 1759.

The state of the objects of the Magdalane charity. The opinion of some common prostitutes concerning such as have returned to their former course of life, after having been relieved.

LETTER XXIV.

To the Rev. Mr. N.

I Know the *benignity* of your mind too well to doubt of your good wishes, and it is with great pleasure I can inform you of our success. Perhaps you will smile when I tell you, that our good *Matron* without the least affectation informed me the other day, with tears in her eyes, that *two* out of *fifteen* girls, who had been honorably discharged, and seemed determined in their resolutions, were notwithstanding *fallen off*. Upon enquiry it was discovered that there was previous reason to suspect their being unsound at heart. You may perceive how high her ambition runs: indeed many of these poor women give very sincere demonstrations of a *religious* disposition. And it is greater matter of wonder, that *thirteen* should continue steady, than that *two* should abandon their principles, or not have resolution to act up to them. I wish the world at large was as pious as this

amounts

amounts to. As to the state of the numbers, upon the whole, you will see it by the paper inclosed how it stands *.

You are certainly in the right, that there are some general marks and characters to which these women correspond; but in their degrees of iniquity, and in the circumstances of the *evil* which have befallen them, they are as different as *their faces*. When these young persons look back on the gross *indignities* which they have *suffered*, one would think it hardly possible that any, who are not as stupid as dirt, should entertain a design of returning to their old course. And yet after all the pains that *can* be taken, we must expect that *some* of them will forget those *indignities*, and their *duty* at the same time, and fondly play with their own *perdition*. But
there

* N. B. This account being brought so low as 31st March 1761.—291 women have been admitted, of whom 98 are now in the house, received at different times in the course of near two years; 27 have been reconciled to their parents; 82 placed out in reputable families as domestic servants; 4 have died; 10 proved lunatic or disordered in mind (supposed to be occasioned by mercurial physic) and sent to *St. Luke's Hospital*, or their proper parishes; 9 dismiss'd at their own request upon good terms, and a prospect of being accommodated so as to live virtuously; 10, seemed well inclined, but could not brook the way of living within walls; 41 their conduct proved them unworthy of the charity. Now since experience has taught the properest means of treating them, and the advantages to be derived from their good behavior, is evident to the meanest among them, their conduct is become so far unexceptionable, that hardly one has been, or deserved to be turned out *disgracefully* for these five or six months. Such is the force of virtue, and the power of good order!

there is something so *horrible* in their *falling off*, that even their *former companions* in wickedness express their *detestation* of it in the strongest terms. I am told lately of some conversation on that head, which happened in my neighborhood. Some of the *common* women, speaking of a certain girl whom we could not *preserve*, expressed themselves to this purpose, and almost in these words, “ *Could we have it in our power, that is, could we bring our inclination to repentance, and find protection from this son of perdition, who haunts our paths, we should never have returned again into this course of life, which this silly creature has done, after being delivered from it. She is a greater shame to humanity than we are: let us hunt her away, as an infectious animal that brings an accumulated load of infamy on our profession, and destroys the only shadow of reason which remained with us, why we pursue this way of living.*”

Such is the language of *some* of the sensible part of these unhappy women, now in the streets, even when the light of their minds is so far extinguished, that they cannot or will not see the *terrible* danger that *surrounds* them. But still they *love* virtue in the persons of others, and this *charity* makes an impression on them.

The declaration which I have just mentioned is contrary to the *general received opinion* of such women, but all *wicked* persons are not equally *foolish*. This is *true* in the particular instance before us, and clearly demonstrates how *extremely shocking* it is, even to them, for any woman to *pretend* to *piety*, without *repentance*.

Cer-

Certainly those who return to the same evil course of life, are in a worse case than they were before: but this consideration chiefly relates to the hearts of individuals; in general we must fix our eyes on the numbers that are preserved.

If these penitents look back with sorrow and indignation on the devices which were once played off to compass evil designs against them; as far as truth has more charms than falsehood, and the works of God are as pleasing and delightful, as the works of the Devil are hideous, so far will every labor in their service awaken their gratitude, and call up in their breast every thought that is generous and worthy of praise. Thus they will be as it were compelled to continue steadfast in their obedience. They know that after this trial, rebellion against God will be as the sin of witchcraft, and their opposition to the laws of Christ as kicking at heaven.

These and such genuine doctrines are urged, as occasions offer, and particularly where there is any suspicion of deceitfulness. Generosity first prevails in the hearts of some; the love of God in others; some hope or some fear still predominates. Where the understanding can be come at, the impression will be most lasting: but it is happy when the heart is reached, though it be by means of the passions. When you consider this attentively, the goodness of your own heart will assist your understanding; and whatever refined doctrines you may hear, you will consult common sense, and sincerely wish

suc-

success in this pious work, which I trust, will be to the honor of God, for the happiness of those who support it, and for the service of our country. I am very sincerely, yours, &c.

*General State of the Magdalane Charity, the Motives to it,
and the probable Means of supporting it.*

LETTER XXV.

To W— O— Esq;

I Thank you for the hints you have given me. When the world sees how well this charity is conducted, such persons of both sexes, who have the deepest sense of human misery, and without pretending to any *superlative sanctity*, are most desirous to see the *christian religion* become the general law of life, in every circumstance of it, will assist in promoting this work. If they *believe* that is done, which is actually performed, in regard to the reformation of these unhappy women, I hope they will not be able to *resist* giving us some marks of their approbation. The undertaking *pleads for itself*; but few persons are so very charitably inclined as to give liberally, *unasked*. This is hardly in the nature of the human mind: for when a design is explained to us satisfactorily, by persons whom we *esteem*, and whose *probity* we have no doubt of, it naturally affords stronger motives to *give*, than when only common fame makes a fair report. Very few things are accomplished without
labor

labor and *attention*; but as there never was an undertaking, which fell-in more with the united force of the *piety* and *humanity* of this nation, it would be hardly just to suppose, that our fellow-subjects will overlook it. Of this however I am well persuaded, that if it is not supported by those who think of its *intrinsic merit*, the *novelty* of the thing, or the efficacy of *fashion*, will not maintain it.

Where the greatest *real misery* is, there the greatest *fraud* and *artifice* are often *suspected*; and it can hardly be otherwise, whilst so many wear the *garb of misery*, and *practise* on the humanity of the unwary. But in this case the very act of submitting to *work*, and desiring to *pray*, and to lead a sober life, imply distress of *mind* as well as *body*. If it is supposed that any of these objects are *sincere* towards *God*, yet totally *friendless*, or forsaken by mankind; willing to *work* for their bread, yet *naked or in rags*, and known to no mortal upon earth, but such as are as *miserable* as themselves, or the partners of their iniquitous lives. If such persons are supposed to exist; and, alas! we know that there are many such, they are surely intitled to *pity* and *relief*.

No tongue can describe the complicated misery of some of these *wretched Beings*. What the poet says of a *woman in distress*, who is the object only of *vulgar attention*, is particularly applicable to these women. Even those who are supposed to have least feeling, may properly be said, to

“ *Kindly*

- “ Kindly look up and at her griefs grow sad,
 “ As if they catch’d the sorrows that fell from her.
 “ Even the lewd rabble, that gather round
 “ To see the sight, stand mute when they behold her,
 “ Govern their roaring throats, and grumble pity.”

Humanity in the breast of a *Pagan* would plead for a woman in such distress, as we sometimes see these. Tho’ some of them should not be sensible of the degree of their own wretchedness, or should even be suspected of some degree of artifice, yet upon the whole, if appearances make for them, it is a crime to be severe.

How often have I, with an aching heart, beheld many miserable objects, even among those who were not thought proper for the charity, or who could not be received consistently with the expence created by great numbers, casting about, what they are to do, without characters, without cloaths, without money!

- “ Their bosoms lab’ring with a boding sigh
 “ Whilst the big tear stood trembling in their eye!”

In these circumstances humanity claims more than a common tribute; and the *politer* part of mankind, whose sensibility is so much greater than that of the rabble, and who best understand what they owe to our common parent; and the reverence due to the divine precepts, delivered by the Son of God himself, or the pens of his immediate friends and followers; we cannot shut our eyes nor stop our ears.

ears. The *pleadings* of such as we believe to be *wretched*, merely as they are *human creatures*, have a title to be heard. — But if, upon the most proper examination, there are grounds to think, that they are very *sincere*, in professing a desire to return to their *obedience* to our *common parent*, and their *offended God*, and there is a *means of receiving them*, the *soul of the christian*, and the *heart of the man*, become advocates for them; and we are compelled to do all we can, to afford them succor on *earth*, in order to their making their *peace with heaven*.

With respect to your *enquiry*, how *these women* are disposed of, after they have given proof of their piety and ability to be trusted with themselves in the world; very much indeed hangs on this point. The objection of “*our having them always to keep*,” is founded in a mistake, by the numbers already happily placed out in the world: but the question is not therefore the less consistent; and though we must not refine too much on events, due regard is to be had when they are *taken in*, how they may be probably sent *out again*, and I will tell you how this matter stands.

The *first* means of disposing of them, is by their *reconciliations to their parents and friends*. Their industry, joined to their sincere repentance, contributing very much to their obtaining such reconciliation, at the same time that it bids fair to lead them into a proper train of life.

The *second* method is by *domestic service*, as *cooks, nursery and house maids*; and some in higher stations, according to their capacities. And here experience already
proves,

proves, that some *good ladies* and *gentlewomen*, from their previous knowledge of these girls, especially such of them as have formerly lived in reputable families, or from regard for their relations, will take them as *servants*. They are kept in *constant practice*, in order to be qualified for *service*, and many persons *enquire* at the house, for *servants*. As the behaviour of the party, recommended by the *Matron*, is fairly known, these women are taken, on a presumption that they will acquit themselves as *good christians*, as well as capable of discharging the office they undertake; and there are now many *masters* and *mistresses* who have the utmost reason to be pleased with their *choice*. Some take these women as servants from mere *piety* and *goodness of heart*, thinking it a disgrace to *religion* and *human nature*, that their fellow-creatures who have once gone astray, should be therefore, for *ever*, rejected.

Here is a fair opportunity of showing what kind of *heads*, or *hearts* we have, and how we stand affected towards the *great duty of christianity*, in *forgiving the trespasses* of others, as we hope our own, though differing in circumstances, may be *forgiven*: for surely no kind of *forgiveness* deserves the name so well, as that which leads us to *receive* and succor the *penitent* and *distressed*.

As to reconciling these women to those whom they have offended; some of them, you may imagine, have no parents nor *relations* to be reconciled to; nor any *friend* to avail themselves of, but such as *heaven* has sent them in the *Magdalane House*. Many of these
young

young women being very *poor*, and having lost their parents when they were very young, were for that very reason exposed to the *distress*, which induced them to take shelter within the walls of this *house*.

You suppose that common servitude will not suit the *temper*, *inclination*, or even the *health* of every one of them : it may be so ; but *necessity has no law*, and the *love of God*, when *sincere*, will lead them to such submissions as appear *necessary* to the preservation of their *virtue* : in general we find, that those think themselves happy who can get *good places*.

There may be among them, as you observe, some very ingenious girls ; but *needle work* can afford comfortable bread only to the *few*, who are uncommonly *industrious* as well as *ingenious*. You need not be afraid, that *piety* will out-run our *judgment*, or lead us into any *romantic* opinions. *Some of these women*, I do verily believe, would die with hunger, rather than again forsake the *paths of virtue* : but you may perceive, that it is not intended to put them on any such *desperate trials*.

In addition to the several methods already mentioned, the gentlemen who conduct this charity have often meditated the introducing one or more *beneficial manufactures*, the gain of which to be employed in support of the house, reserving a portion of it for the use of those who may be the ablest proficients, in the same manner as now practised with regard to their *needle work*. In this some few might arrive at a proficiency, and be put in a capacity of gaining more than in common needle work : but

every

every thing cannot be done at once. If any small number of them can be thus taught, as in a school, and find the means of a decent support, it will be so far a happy circumstance, as they may the more easily marry and settle in life. It is a *great recommendation* to any woman, if she can earn her own *bread* as a manufacturer, as in fact she brings a fortune with her to a husband, and will be in so much the fairer way of breeding up children to *serve God*, and become *useful subjects*. But I apprehend that *domestic service* will be the principal object for the major part of these women; and I hope in whatever station they are, they will live comfortably to *old age*, and *die in peace*.

Whatever methods are taken, you may rest assured, that the gentlemen concerned in this affair will adopt *one general principle*, that *industry* must keep pace with *piety*. This charity depends on the benevolence of our *fellow-subjects*, who differ in temper and *apprehension*. We are a *commercial*, *sagacious* people, and understand what human nature is, as well as most others in the world: but for the same reason that our minds are *strong*, we are apt to go into *extremes*. The *highest pitch of piety* that human nature is capable of, cannot, from the situation of mankind, be the lot of great numbers: and it is not so *wonderful* as *lamentable*, that we see it so often *halting*, and either *falling much short of the object* which heaven has put within the reach of *common mortals*, or *zealously* pressing forward, and *injudiciously overshooting* the mark. It has been well observed, that in the same degree *enthusiasm* takes

possession of the mind, true religion forsakes it: and yet there is a certain warmth, often called enthusiasm, without which the flame of heavenly love trembles, as if the lamp were expiring. The peculiar characteristic of the charity in question, is goodness; and the piety it includes seems to go beyond that of any other, however well regulated. As in the world at large, so in considering this object, he has the most regard to the welfare of the community, who, not forgetting that he is a sojourner in this world, contemplates the tempers and dispositions of mankind, as well as their virtues; and by a skilful, no less than an upright conduct, converts them to the great ends of happiness. We may also trace out the beautiful order of things, by observing how compassion is instrumental to the exercise of reason; and how often it does that, which reason alone had no prospect of accomplishing.

If I comprehend this matter right, application to useful pursuits, and such as the world sees the fruits of, will give higher impressions of the integrity of the heart, which God only can know, than pretensions to the most exalted piety, though there should be the appearances of such piety: and the more substantial the sanctity is, the less noise it will make. The promotion of industry and piety, rendering each instrumental to the support of the other, will prevent the thoughtless and the jealous, the politician, and the saint, from starting objections: for whilst it weakens the force of the most distant imputation, that the design is too good to last, it will secure such a portion of

unexceptionable *righteousness*, as will render it *good enough to last*, and support the *dignity* and propriety of the original intention. The favor of every rank and order of the people, who are zealous for the *honor of God*, or the *welfare* of their country, may be thus engaged; and the *charity* fixed on the most *permanent basis*.

As to the danger there may be hereafter, supposing that we should establish any *manufactures*, in which it will be necessary for women to work in company *, it is probable they will be able to associate with *sober company, if they please*. In *domestic service*, there are *no places* without some *danger*; and can it be supposed that the *lonely sempstress* is not subject to be haunted by *evil spirits* in the shape of *men*? If these women are not well fortified *with religion*, and prudent to keep danger at *arm's length*, we may easily foretell, that many of them will fall from the glory of their *repentance*. But if they lay in such a stock of *common sense*, as well as *piety*, as may naturally be expected of those who *really* mean to *repent* of their sins, they will *shun and avoid danger*, and remain *as free from it*, as any other part of mankind can do, let the station they are in, be what it may. They will do well, however, to keep their own *counsel*; and where they cannot *conceal their story* without *falsehood*, they should not think a *professed repentance* a reproach; but a strong tie upon them, in the eyes of *men*, as well as in the *sight*

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* In making a carpet, for instance, where several work at the same loom, they may perchance be *all* women, or husband and wife: and small carpets require but one hand to work on them.

of

of God; and their behavior should be suitable to it. On the other hand, she who boasts of having been in the *Magdalane House*, must conclude that other people will think she desires to be esteemed no better than when she first went thither; there is a great difference between telling a lie to conceal a fact, and wantonly divulging of it. The *pious* and the *prudent* will know how to deport themselves according to the circumstances they are in; and as for others, who have no *piety* nor *prudence*, admonition can be but of little value.—Indeed, Sir, I believe that many will find their way to *earthly* and *heavenly* happiness, by the means of this charity, who would have enjoyed neither without it; and that is saying a great deal for the *institution*.

Inclosed I send you the *meditations* I mentioned. Some serious reflections relating to the object in question, joined to the *public devotion*, laid the foundation of these *private* thoughts. We ought always to keep alive the *love of our country*, in what the *heart* feels, as well as in what the *head* apprehends. Many individuals constitute the whole; and every private person is of great consequence to himself. In both views we stand in need of *help from God*; but nothing can raise the soul to a due sense of our dependance on him, more than the devastations created by *fire* and *sword*. Let *victory* declare for one side or the other, *misery* follows close at her heels; and the *earth* loses her inhabitants. Heaven has been very indulgent to this nation hitherto: I hope we shall have *piety*, *military virtue*, and *political steadiness*, enough to secure a *good peace*! FAREWEL.

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DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS.

I.

In acknowledgement of Mercies past, and for future Mercies.

O Lord God of my life, who hast so often preserved me, under thy chastisements ; withdraw not thy protection from me ! I lifted up my supplications from the earth, and prayed for deliverance from *dangers* and *death*, and thou hast wonderfully preserved me. I will think upon thy mercies, *O Lord*, and, from the depths of my soul, confess my *transgressions* before thee ! *O deliver* me from all *outward* evils, and from my own *propensity* to wickedness ; and make me not a reproach unto my own heart ! According to the *multitude* of thy mercies, and the *greatness* of thy name, consider my meditations. Keep me, *O LORD*, from presumptuous offences, and let them not get the dominion over me. Guard my heart from the sins which most easily beset me, and heal the diseases of my mind, that I may never swerve from my obedience to thee, nor my heart be estranged from thy love. And however it shall please thee, to dispose of the *remainder* of my days, *O give me thy aid*, that I may stretch forth my hands towards thy *heaven of heavens*, and duly lamenting my sins and infirmities, obtain thy pardon ! Give me a *heart* to love thee, *O LORD, with all my soul,*

and with all my strength. Teach me to discern the *happiness* of serving thee, whatever *temporal* evils shall befall me; and withhold from me whatever is *hurtful*, tho' it should be stamp'd with all the marks of *earthly felicity*. Give me *temperance* and *fortitude* under all temptations, and let the afflictions of my *life*, serve to render my *death* the more glorious. This I beg, *O Father of mercy*, for the sake of *his* sufferings, who died to redeem the world!

2.

On Death.

O LORD, *the resurrection and the life*, in whom, whoe'er trusteth shall never suffer *eternal death*, I behold my days passing away like a *shadow*, and am sensible of my approaches to the *grave*: shed thy influence on my heart, that I may improve every moment of my life, and recover the precious time which I have lost! Instruct me, *O God of wisdom*, how to prepare my spirit for that dread hour, when I shall appear before thy judgment-seat! *Full of the hopes of a blissful immortality*, let me live *prepared* for death; and rather *desire*, than *fear* my *dissolution*. Thy *eternal decree* is past, and it is appointed to man *once to die*; O teach me to meet the *king of terrors* without *dismay*: Teach me to receive him as a *welcome messenger*, that whether *early* or *late*, I may *joyfully obey thy summons*.

Grant me, O LORD, to *triumph* in the thought, of being delivered from the possibility of offending thee.— Give me resolution to look forward beyond the grave,
and

and to behold, with an equal mind, all the *fleeting* joys, and *transient* miseries of the present life. — And thou, O *blessed Redeemer of the world*, who didst pay the *ransom* for *repenting sinners*, and breakest the *shackles of mortality*, direct my steps to the mansions of thy eternal glory, and bring me *with joy* into the presence of my Father and my God !

3.

On my Enemies and Reproachers.

O Lord, the God of my fathers, thou never-failing friend to thy faithful servants ! save me from them that *secretly* revile me ; and deliver me from those whose tongues are whet with *bitter* words ! Arise up for me in the judgment which thou hast commanded, and be my *helper* and *defender*. Consider the troubles which I have suffered, from the *injustice* of other men ; and from such as set themselves against me. Forgive *their transgressions*, O LORD, and let not thine indignation be armed against them. Give them a right mind, that they may know the *truth*, and seek for thy *pardon*. Let *innocence*, *simplicity* and *resignation* reign in my heart, and grant me such a measure of thy *grace*, that I may do *them* GOOD, for the INJURIES which they have done to me, and pray for their *peace*, in the name, and thro' the mediation of the *meek* and *blessed Jesus*, my Saviour and Redeemer !

4.

On Liberty, and the Humanity connected with it.

O LORD OMNIPOTENT, Father and Protector of men, beseech thee, give me *understanding* that I may know thy

will, and vindicate the freedom of mankind. Give me *courage* to maintain, and *tendernefs* to plead the cause of the *poor* and the *distressed*. Let a *due sense of justice* keep me from all offences against the *rights of human nature*: and if it should please thy Providence to call me forth, grant that I may be *ready*, and *willing* to offer up my life to thee, in *defence* of my fellow-subjects, that whilst they observe their duty to *their superiors*, no tyrannical practices may violate that *equity*, which thou hast ordained; nor any injurious customs deface thy image on our minds. This I beg, *O Lord*, for the sake of thy *glorious Son*, who dignified the *nature* of man, by taking it on himself, and at length *died*, that he might save the world from *slavery*, and eternal death!

5.

On national Blessings.

O Lord and Sovereign of the universe, who in the bountiful operations of thy Providence hast selected, where the glories of this world shall shine with the most *distinguished lustre*; I beseech thee to continue thy bounties to us, who have received so many *great*, so many *signal* marks of thy *mercy* and *loving kindness*! Reward those, *O Lord*, who worship *thee*; and let all the inhabitants of these kingdoms be found *faithful* in thy fight. Lift up thine arm against them who meditate *evil things*; and let thy *peace* rest upon those that love thy name! Give us *fruitful fields*, and let our *vallies* rejoice in *plenty*: yet suffer us not to be intoxicated with *ease*, nor lulled into
any

any *false security*. Let *temperance* and *humanity*, *benevolence* and *charity*, and above all the *constant fear of thee*, be the ruling principle of our actions, that *good order*, and *true religion* may abound amongst us. Stretch forth thy mighty arm, *O Lord*, to succor and preserve all such *charitable institutions*, as are productive of happiness to individuals, and benefit to the *community*; and give me patience and perseverance, tenderness and zeal, to discharge *my duty* as a member of it.—This I beg, *O Father of mercies*, for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, the Maker and Redeemer of the world!

6.

On national Peace.

RETURN, *O mighty Lord of hosts*! Return, and visit us with thy salvation! Extend thy *particular providences* and relieve the *bleeding earth*! *O gracious Redeemer*, who hast overcome the world, and subjected *Satan* to thy dominion, inspire the minds of princes with a true sense of *humanity*, and a strict obedience to thy laws! Give them wisdom to make choice of ministers, whose councils may obtain, and whose prudence may *preserve peace* in the earth; and let their devices be directed to the *advancement of virtue*, and the *solid happiness* of mankind. Give us, *O Lord*, the felicity which thou hast promised to thy servants, that we may rejoice under the shadow of thy *mercies*, and bless *thy name* for ever!

7.

On the Prosperity of our Commerce and civil Government.

O LORD GOD, the fountain of all knowledge, who hast given to man the powers of *invention*, and *inclination to social intercourse*, I beseech thee to lead this nation to the knowledge of every science beneficial to mankind, that our *com-*
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mercy may reach to the remotest regions of the earth. Let the sun be always shining upon some of us, and keep us all in mind of thy presence, and the brightness of thy *ineffable glory*. Let *justice* and *equity* be the rule and guide of our actions, that all nations may *behold* the wonders which thou hast wrought in us; and all that dwell upon the earth, *know* that thou art the *eternal God*, who *humblest* one, and *settest* up another. Purify our *affections*, and enlarge our minds, that *riches* may not *deceive* us, nor evil desires grow up in our hearts, to choak our love of thee! Let *gratitude* for thy numberless mercies exalt our souls; and *benignity* to each other, render our wealth a common blessing; that *piety* and *industry* may unite in promoting thy cause, and the *glory of these times* be recorded to all *succeeding generations*! O LORD, in mercy forgive the *transgressions* of thy people; and grant unto our *rulers* a spirit to punish the *wicked*, and to cherish and protect the *righteous*; that *their example* may be a monument of thy *grace* and *heavenly benediction*; and both *prince* and *people* lift up their hearts to thee, through *Jesus Christ* the mighty Lord of life, and Redeemer of mankind!

8.

For Defence in War, and national Advantages.

O Lord God of hosts, at whose frowns all nature trembles, who *increaseth* the nations, or *destroyeth* them; and in whose sight the *greatest potentates* are but *dust* and *ashes*; have mercy upon us, and send thy *fear* upon all the earth; —*Save, and defend my country!*— O *save*, and *deliver* her from her enemies, and from her own manifold *transgressions*; that with *one common voice*, we may send up our
prayers

prayers to thee ! With thy *right-hand*, and with thy *mighty arm* thou hast defended us for *ages past* ; *shield* and *protect* us, O LORD, till *time* shall be no more ! Give us a due sense of our *distinguished happiness*, that being defended by the *waters* that surround us, *we may always rejoice in safety* ; and protected by so *admirable a form* of government, pay all due obedience to it ; and preserve the *purity* of thy *holy religion*, as taught by the *great priest* and *prophet* of the world ! Thus guarded by thy care, let us with *upright minds* adore thy goodness and obey thy laws, through the mediation of thy dear Son, to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghost, one eternal, incomprehensible GOD, all power and dominion, honor and glory, and happiness, be ascribed, through the endless ages of eternity !

9.

For the same.

O God omnipotent, who stillest the *rage of princes*, and turnest their hearts as seemest best in thine eyes ; though many and mighty nations be *gathered together* in heaps, let them be broken in *pieces*, and their councils brought to nought ; for the *decrees* which they pronounce shall not stand against *thee*, O Lord ! Make them afraid, and consume their *boldness* and strength, that they may be astonished at their own defeat. Be thou ever *with us*, O Lord, by sea and land, and cast them down by the sword of those that love thy name. And if it be thy pleasure, may a speedy period be put to this war,
that

that the *widow* and the *orphan* may dry their tears, and peace be secured to us, that our blood may not be spilt in vain !

Extend thy compassion to our *enemies*. Humble their aspiring minds, as seemeth good in thy sight, that the *earth* may enjoy *repose*, and all its inhabitants offer up continual praises and adoration to thy name, through the mediation of thy dear Son, *the mighty Prince and Redeemer of the world !*

10.

In Remembrance of the Battle of Minden.

O LORD GOD OF HOSTS, stretch forth thy mighty arm, that we may resist our enemies like a wall of brass : and follow and overtake them, till they shall be *dispersed !* Gird us with strength unto the battle, that our adversaries may fall under our feet. Level their bulwarks, O LORD, and consume their *magazines* with fire, that they may know that thou art *God*, and that thou wilt be exalted above the earth ! Spread the wings of thy mercies, and protect the cause we espouse ; and the lands where thou art truly worshipped ; that the ambitious aspiring temper of our *neighbor nation* may be curbed, and these kingdoms enjoy safety, and *uninterrupted peace*. Give us thy *blessing*, O LORD, that we may *know*, and *fear*, and *worship* thee, through *Jesus Christ*, the mighty Prince and Redeemer of the world !

11.

II.

On the taking of Quebec.

O Lord, how wonderful are thy mercies to us ! Thou hast subdued the enemies of my country, and scattered our foes ! Thou hast given us up their lands, that they may no longer disturb our repose ! Let the *heavens rejoice*, and the *earth be glad* ; for thou hast given victory to those who seek *thy glory, thy worship, and renown* ! O continue to inspire the leaders of our fleets and armies with that *benevolence and wisdom*, that *fortitude and contempt of death*, which has shone forth in those who fell so bravely on this great occasion ! Give my fellow-subjects, O Lord, such a due sense of thy mercies, that our *humility* may increase with our *victories*, and all our success in war be referred to thy glory, and promote peace on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord !

12.

*On the Defeat of the French Fleet *.*

O Lord eternal, thou mighty God of hosts, and giver of victory ! I pour out my soul in gratitude for these repeated instances of thy mercies, in that thou hast vanquished and subdued the foes of my country ; and by defeating their designs, delivered us from great and imminent danger. *Thou art the Saviour of nations* ! If thou guardest us not,
the

* In August 1759 by admiral Boscawen off Lagos. This French fleet was commanded by De la Clue, and supposed to be bound to Brest, to join another large fleet, to convoy an army to invade Ireland, or attack Jamaica.

the most vigilant will wake in vain ! But *thy hand*, and the mighty strength of *thine arm*, have confounded the devices of our enemies. Neither their *crafty wiliness*, nor the pavilion of darkness that surrounded them, could frustrate the vigilance of thy servants. *Thou art the hope of the ends of the earth, and of them that go upon the broad sea.* Defend us, O Lord, for ever, for Jesus Christ his sake !

13.

In Remembrance of the Defeat of the French Fleet off Belleisle.

O God of host, Father, and Lord of heaven and earth, still do'st thou give us victory and renown ! Thou hast delivered these dominions from the dangers that threatened them ! Help us, O Lord, in all perils ; and let generations to come, so fear to offend thee, that they may never be afraid of their enemies ! Thus let their devices be brought to nought. Let neither darkness, nor the tempestuous billows, nor all the dangers of rocks, defend them from thy stretched-out arm, and the vigilance of thy faithful servants. O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the world ! Where shall our praises and our wonder cease ! Thou art God from everlasting ! O grant that we may serve thee in true holiness on earth, that we may live with thee for ever in thy kingdom in heaven, through the merits of Jesus Christ !

14.

For the Officers and Men in the Field, and on Expeditions.

O almighty Lord, and Father of the children of men, whose providence reigns in peace and war, I beseech thee grant to all the commanders who go forth to battle, in the service of this nation, such a measure of thy heavenly benediction, that their councils may be directed with *wisdom* and *fortitude* ! Make them *secret* and *vigilant* in all their *designs* ; *manly* and *intrepid* in *execution*. Give thine angels charge over those, who act under them, and protect them all, with thy power and mercy, against the rigor of the seasons, and the complicated distresses of war. Bring them all home with *honor* to the nation ; *contentment* to the KING, and satisfaction to the state ; that the end of their *expeditions* may be a *happy*, and a *lasting peace*, and the renown of their arms fix a period to these bloody destructions. Keep all nations in tranquility, O Lord, and let all our hosts seek the light of thy countenance, and the protection of thy mighty arm ; that with one common voice they may send up their prayers to thee, and *live* as become thy *faithful soldiers and servants* to the end of their days ! This, O LORD, I beg, for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, the Prince of peace, and Redeemer of the world !

15.

In Thanksgiving for Victory over our Enemies in general.

O Lord God, thou art *king* from everlasting ages ! O send help unto thy servants, that through thee we may

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overthrow our enemies, and in thy name tread them under that rise up against us! Yet not unto us, not unto our arms, O LORD, be ascribed our successes in war: for it is *thou* that savest us, and puttest them to confusion that hate us. Of *thee*, O God, let us make our boast; let us praise thy name, and tell of all the wonders which thou hast wrought. Thou hast given us *victory*, as a token of thy *favor*, that such as fear thee may triumph and rejoice in thy *righteousness* and *truth*! Thou hast delivered us with thy *right-hand*; and through thy mighty arm, O God, have we done *great acts*, that our enemies may confess that *thou art God alone*! O teach me for ever to *praise* and adore thy name, for this and all thy mercies to my country, through *Jesus Christ* my blessed Lord and Saviour!

16.

For the Restoration of Peace.

GLORY in the highest be unto thee, O FATHER OMNIPOTENT! Let *peace* reign for ever! Extend thy mercies, O Lord, to all the *children of men*, that *reason* and *justice* may decide their quarrels, under the *mighty banners* of the *Prince of peace*. Let the remembrance of his *holy life* and *meritorious death*, influence the *minds* of all the *christian world*, that *Wars* may cease from the earth! O eternal God, whose *power* no creature can resist, to whom it belongeth to punish the *sins* of *nations*, *mercifully withhold thy vengeance from ours*. Arise and visit us with thy salvation; give us *peace*, O Lord, and grant that we
may

may live so on *earth*, as finally to be received into thy kingdom in heaven, for *Jesus Christ* his sake !

17.

*In Remembrance of the Death of the late King, and the
Accession of his present Majesty.*

O Lord God of *hosts*, thou mighty legislator of the universe, look down from the glories of thy throne on this nation ! Let us adore thy goodness, for the length of days of our late Sovereign, and the *clemency* and *moderation* with which he hath ruled over us ; and for all the *wealth* and *tranquillity*, the *honor* and *renown* which we enjoy. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power ; the glory, the victory, and the majesty : for all that is in heaven and earth is thine ; and thou reignest over all. O continue thy blessings to us in the person of our present *Monarch* ! Magnify him, O LORD, in the sight of all his people ; and be graciously pleased to inspire him with a true sense of the weighty charge of a crown, that he may be *steady* in his *pursuit of virtue*. Enrich his mind with *knowledge* and *wisdom* ; and inspire his heart with the most *exalted* love of thee, that he may execute thy will in all things, and worship, *with fear*, before thy throne ! Give him length of days, and uninterrupted felicity in *peace* and *war*, that in every state and condition, which thy wisdom shall ordain, he may, with *purity* and *singleness of heart*, obey thy righteous laws, through the merits and mediation of our Great Lord and Saviour, the mighty Prince and Redeemer of the world !

On the King and Nation in general.

O merciful God, and almighty Ruler of universal Being, who hast anointed thy servant to be our king; protect him, O Lord, against the enemy of mankind, that dwelling under thy defence, he may abide under thy shadow! Be thou ever his hope and strong hold, and exalt his renown, that all the nations of the earth may confess his glory! Let thy faithfulness and truth be his shield and buckler; and give thine angels charge over him, to guide him in all thy ways! Give him grace to serve thee with awe, that he may rule his people with wisdom; and they knowing what belongs to their present and everlasting peace, may so regulate their desires, that the riches and industry of individuals may be directed to their proper objects, and promote the safety and happiness of the state. Let clemency and benevolence, justice and mercy surround his throne, and direct his councils; that corruption may be rooted up, and no false refinements in politics injure the morals of his subjects, or prevent the true ends of government. Let his example shine forth as the sun in his meridian brightness, and so influence the manners of his people, that we may grow up in virtue and true religion, and be rendered acceptable in thy sight, O Lord of righteousness, and sun of eternal glory!—and finally by thy mercy our sins and iniquities be done away.—Let his example extend to all generations, that his reign may likewise influence the conduct of future kings, and generations yet unborn

bless

bles the glory of his time. Preserve his *family* and *servants*; and protect the *Lords* and *Commons* of this land. And I beseech thee, O *gracious* GOD, to shower down thy choicest blessings on the *Bishops* and the *Clergy*, and all schools and seminaries of true learning, that thy gospel may be diligently taught amongst us, and thy *true worship* established in all our hearts. Grant the KING to live *happy*, in thy fear, and under thy protection, to the utmost period of human age; and when his time shall come, let him *die* in thy *favor*; *rest* in thy *peace*; and *reign* for ever in thy *glory*! — This I beg with *uplifted hands*, O *merciful and tender Father*, through the *intercession*, and for the sake of thy *dear Son*, who died to *reform*, and to *redeem* the world!

Now that I have given you this opportunity of animadverting on these *pious patriotic thoughts*, I cannot help recommending to you an attentive *study* of the majestic beauty and simplicity of our liturgy; not as suited to the *public worship* only, but also for private use. The *prayers* contained in it, seem to be adapted to all circumstances, and fit for the *peasant* or the *noble*; intelligible to a *child*, and yet with sense worthy the acuteest *christian philosopher*. Perhaps you will find some superior; these which I send you, being almost the first I cast my eyes upon.

1.

For a good Life in general.

O almighty Lord and everlasting God, vouchsafe I beseech thee to direct, sanctify, and govern both my heart and body, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments: that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, I may be preserved in body and soul, thro' my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

2.

For divine Assistance.

O almighty God, the Fountain of all wisdom, who knowest my necessities before I ask, and my ignorance in asking: I beseech thee to have compassion upon my infirmities; and those things, which for my unworthiness I dare not, and for my blindness I cannot ask, vouchsafe to give me, for the worthiness of thy Son Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

3.

For religious Courage.

O God, who art the author of peace, and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth my eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: defend me, thy humble servant, in all assaults of my enemies; that surely trusting in thy defence, I may not fear the power of any adversary, through the might of Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

4.

For the Morning.

O Lord my heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought me to the beginning of this day ! defend me in the same by thy mighty power ; and grant that this day I may not fall into any sin, neither run into any kind of danger ; but that all my doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that is righteous in thy sight, through my blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

5.

For the Evening.

Lighten my darkness, I beseech thee, O Lord, and by thy great mercy defend me from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son, my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

But of all forms, that which we call the *Lord's Prayer* is the most majestically simple, suited to all conditions and capacities ; conveying the noblest apprehensions of God ; inculcating the justest sentiments of our dependance on him, and of mutual good-will to our fellow-creatures ; permitting us to hope for mercy, but not on any other condition than as we show it to them.

*Thoughts on the Methodists. The absurd Doctrines and Manner
of Preaching in use among them.*

L E T T E R XXVI.

To P — G — Esq;

Dear Sir,

IF the *public benefit* ought to be the first object in the thoughts of a good subject, what is esteemed a *public injury* merits his attention in the next place. Many are of opinion, that the *doctrine* of the *Methodists* is a public injury, and that this kind of fanaticism is a matter of political consideration.—There is something awful, even in a supposed delusion, in *religious* concerns: you will judge how I *feel* myself affected, when I tell you what my own notions of these people are. If you mean to go deep into the subject, read the *Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared*, in 2 vol. 12mo, and a pamphlet intitled, *the principles and practices of the Methodists*; both written by men of great learning and candor; and zealous for the christian protestant religion. — You will soon judge of the propriety of *your friend* — turning to this *new* and wonderful doctrine, which *may* be *felt*, it seems, but cannot be *understood*.

Under a notion of sanctity, a great number of the lower classes of the people have been carried, as it were,
into

into a *wilderness*, by the teachers of this doctrine, who plume themselves, as if that were a *certain proof* of the *truth* of what they teach. It seems to me, that the arguments they use may be employed in favor of transubstantiation, as well as of *Methodism*; for the Popish clergy cannot possibly deal more in miracles than the Methodists; and every devotee of the church of *Rome*, who has been the leader of a new sect, has constantly pleaded his *calls* and *commissions* from heaven.

There ever will be *contests* on the subject of religion, in a country where *toleration* is an essential part of the constitution. But if under a notion of the only *true christianity*, the general tenor of the *christian* doctrine is grossly *mistaken*, or *wilfully* abused: If the *poor* are taught to expect what neither *reason*, nor *experience*, nor *revelation* can warrant, the doctrine may be of a *dangerous* tendency. And if it is destructive of that *humility*, which constitutes the *characteristic of christianity*; or if the teachers of it do not *mean* what they *say*; or meaning it, *pry* into the secrets of heaven, imagining that they have made discoveries, beyond their neighbors, they will not only grow presumptuous, but despise others, and may pretend to knowledge which the scriptures declare is not given, even to the angels in heaven. When this happens, is it not an invasion of the prerogative of the *Almighty*? and does it not tend to the subversion of all religion? Is it not necessary for every well-regulated state to *discountenance* wild *fancies* and *opinions*, lest under a notion of introducing the reign of the *saints*

on earth, the people should forget what they owe to *civil government*; and confound that subordination which is essential to our *religious rights*.

In attempting to be more than *angels*, we may render ourselves less than *men*. As *rational* Beings, we must be accountable for the use of our *reason*. If we exclude reason, religion will soon follow, and *enthusiasm* and *superstition* be substituted in their place. If every thing that may *possibly* belong to religion, considered as a science, is brought down to the measure of *spiritual feelings*; and not contented with worshipping God, and obeying his commandments in sincerity of heart, *coblers* and *tinkers* must needs turn preachers of the gospel, we must not be surprized to see them convert the scriptures into *foolishness*, and make a play-game of religion.

It must be granted, that those who treat the *heart*, as having but a *small share* in religion, may fall short of their aim; but those who treat the *understanding* as having no *share* in it, will convert it into *fancy* and *opinion*. From a vain attempt at excellencies, beyond what the condition of human nature will warrant, they will disqualify themselves for the performance of such duties as are absolutely required: and as *fantastic* hopes lay the foundation of *impious* confidence, the absence of such hopes create gloomy and indigested fears, which as certainly “betray the succors that reason affords.”—Those whose imaginations are disturbed, are most easily frightened. In the mean while, a *daring* confidence of having a peculiar interest in heaven, in *such* minds as
are

are most susceptible of these hopes, will create an arrogance and presumption, which no correction can reach or *rectify*.

If it can with truth be said any where, that every man has a religion of his own, it is in this nation: nor is it surprizing that *time*, *place*, and some common favorite opinions, should bring men into communities, form them into *sects*, and make it the *interest* of a *few* to support those sects, at *all events*: but honest men generally keep their opinions to themselves, if these clash with the religion of their country, and are of a tendency to unhinge the minds of their fellow-subjects: or if they cannot support their opinion by any revelation from God, common modesty forbids their intruding it upon the world. If a doctrine is not intelligible upon principles of reason, the common gift of nature, it must be maintained on some *præternatural* foundation, or *miraculous* communications with heaven; and the whole will then rest on that issue: but if it cannot make good what it pretends to, from that moment its professors may be supposed *distempered* in their minds, or *dishonest* in heart.

I am told by a very worthy friend of mine, that he was once acquainted with a *Frenchman* who used to tell a melancholy story of his sufferings, as a slave, in *Algiers*; and *wept* when he related it: He had told his tale so often, that at length he believed, or seemed to believe what he said; tho' in good truth he had never been out of *France* in all his life.—This I do most seriously believe to be the case of some of the *Leaders of the Methodists*: with this
remark-

remarkable difference, that they *gain* considerably by the *story* they relate of their *communications* with *heaven*. Good might be originally intended, with regard to the vulgar, but *no end is good, where the means are evil*.

The best meaning part of them, mistaking the too common abuse of our rule of faith, for an error in the *faith itself*; or laying much too little stress on *good works*; run into wild extremes with regard to their opinion of both. In the mean while, I have been assured by some very sensible persons, who have argued with them, that there is no such thing in nature; as *pinning* them down. If you bring the matter to the tribunal of reason, they will not allow that *reason* can be the umpire. Being really below *reason* in their *belief*, they affect, out of reverence to *religion*, to be above making that use of it, which we imagine *God* intended we should make; and consequently, in the very first instance, they make *religion* administer to the destruction of the noblest workmanship of heaven, displayed in *the reason of man*, as exercised in the contemplation of the perfections of *God*, and belief of the truths of christianity: and thus they evidently set religion at variance with itself.

And how shall we set those *right*, whose first principle it is to *exclude reason*, as if *faith* and the *grace of God*, by an occasional miraculous intervention, were the primary cause of all the *reasoning powers*, which the same God has given us; forgetting that *reason* constitutes our *very nature and essence as men*; and that without the *previous exertion of it*, no *faith*, or, I presume, *grace*, can be received

ceived by us. Zeal without *knowledge* thus blazes forth, and its adherents may think themselves *enlightened*; but they rather seem to be in danger of consuming themselves in their own flame: for whilst they degrade human nature, they disqualify themselves from distinguishing *light* from *darkness*, and consequently prepare their minds to receive as *doctrines*, as rank absurdities as ever prevailed in any age of the world. This, *Sir*, seems to be the *tendency of Methodism*.

“ The whole doctrine of *heavenly voices* and *visions*, of *secret impressions* and *illuminations*, as laid down down by our modern reformers, has this natural and obvious exception in its way, that it is not agreeable to the *other parts of God's providential administration*, nor suitable to the nature of a *moral Being*, placed in a state of *trial* and *probation*. We are not sensible that *GOD does*, nor has he told us that he *will*, usually manifest himself by any *extraordinary* acts of his power, or *display* of his presence: he leaves us to discern him in the *order of his works*, and the regular government of his *providence*. He has given us his *WRITTEN WORD*, as the *standing rule of our RELIGIOUS conduct*. In interpreting and applying this rule, we must *make use of our understanding*, cultivated in the best manner we are able, and furnished with all the *helps* we can procure. What assistance from his *good Spirit* he is pleased to give us for apprehending this rule, or living suitably to it, will doubtless *be given in such a way*, as is consistent with our *liberty*, and the *free exercise of our own faculties*.”

Again :

Again: "The great Father of lights, who perfectly knows all the various inlets of knowledge, and to whose view every avenue to the human mind is open, can doubtless impress upon it any communication, he may be pleased to make, with a fulness of evidence that is unquestionable, and a degree of force that is irresistible." He *may* do this, but has it been his usual way of dealing with *rational, free, and accountable* creatures? He may assist our *understandings* and *wills*, but does it appear that he thinks proper entirely to *over-rule* them? — The tree is known by its *fruits*; but the primary causes in nature, how it grows, even this is beyond our comprehension. And can there be greater presumption, than to bring the Deity on the stage, as if we had not justice done us, unless his *greatest wonders* are brought down to the measure of our capacities, and made familiar to our hourly experience?

Do you believe that the *learned* and *reverend* gentleman, whom I have quoted, is in the *right*? If he is, the *Methodists* are certainly in the *wrong*. To suppose that none of their leaders are in the least *unsound at heart*, is going farther perhaps than common sense will warrant: and if we reckon upon such, and exclude those who are *extremely illiterate*, without any education at all, with those, who, from the very nature of this doctrine, must be supposed to have *very warm imaginations*; I apprehend the number remaining, notwithstanding their high pretences to the obtaining proselytes, will be very inconsiderable. And if the truth were known, though
these

these all agree to lead the *vulgar*, there may be amongst them as many different *strange* opinions, as there are *strange* preachers.

If you insist on bringing these people to the test of the *wisdom* of past ages, or the *present* state of learning; the superior parts and large mental endowments; or the exemplary piety of many, who differ with them in opinion; this amounts to nothing, but *wordly wisdom*, which, they say, has no concern in the case.

Talk to them of *order* and *subordination*, as essential to good government, and the *peace* of society; the answer to this is ready, "*We must obey God, and not man.*"

Appeal *then* to the *scriptures*, and the authority it carries along with it: this they say is not to be understood upon the same principles as direct our judgments in other writings, and that our *natural* faculties are very inadequate to the forming a true judgment.

Thus, my *good friend*, if you are inclined to turn Methodist, every thing that you have been bred up in veneration of, except the *grace of God*, must be discarded; and even that too, unless you will *allow* that you know *when* and *how* you received it: and you must remember the exact instant of time. In a word, you must refer the whole to *divine illumination*, and the immediate influence of the *Holy Ghost* operating on your mind; or something so much like it, that themselves cannot tell the difference. But for fear they should say more than can free them from the imputation of being *really mad*, they often say what neither themselves, nor any mortal besides, can under-

understand. In this however the vulgar agree, that after a certain probation a man may say, “ *I am confident that I shall be saved;*” and till this can be said, if I understand them, they maintain that the soul is not in its true and proper state; *that is*, in a state of salvation. Is not this a glorious creed! “ *I am confident I shall be saved!*” why, it amounts to more than all the *indulgencies* or *absolutions*, obtainable by *gifts* or *penance*, in *Italy*, *Spain*, or *Portugal*!

If they *can* make this out from the *New Testament*, I have read it to a very bad purpose. If they *cannot*, but refer me to such exercises of my soul, as will produce these *divine illuminations*, and with all my might I cannot reach them; what am I to *think* of myself? — *Bid farewell to all hopes of heaven?* God forbid! no: I will *hope* still. If I am to work out my salvation with fear and trembling, *I see no room for such confidence*. If whilst I stand, I am to take heed lest I fall, *I see no room for such confidence*. If St. Paul thought it necessary to be watchful of himself, lest, whilst he was preaching to others, he should be himself *a cast-away*; *I see no reason for such confidence*. Neither do I *see*, or *hear*, of any, except *Methodists*, who have such *illuminations*: and yet I both *see* and *hear* of many, who believe in God, and in Jesus Christ; are more *learned*, more *wise*, more regular moral men, more eminent in station and character, indubitably zealous for the good of mens souls, and *laboring* for that *good* on the *christian* plan; in short, as *perfect men* as the earth produces to all appearance, and yet not pre-

pretending to any such *illuminations*. — Therefore I cannot help suspecting, that there is *fraud* or *madness* at the bottom of this pretension ; especially when I discover a strain of *artfulness* run tthrough the whole conduct of the preachers of this new doctrine.

The same ingenious writer observes, that “ their interpretations of *holy writ* often have something plausible, when they have nothing of a just and real foundation ; *seeming* to agree with the literal sense of the words, when they plainly contradict the whole tenor of its *meaning*, and are utterly inconsistent with the *intention* and *express terms of the christian covenant*.” Several of the passages on which they lay the *stress* of their doctrine, “ relate to the exercise of extraordinary powers granted to some christians in the first ages of the church ; and which were necessary *then* for its support or propagation ; but which were neither *promised*, nor seem necessary, nor appear to have been granted in following ages.”

This seems to include the most material part of the *fallacy* of what these people pretend to. As to mankind’s being imposed upon ; there is one part of them never easy but when they are under a *delusion* of one kind or other. When our *passions* or *appetites* deceive us, we know where to apply for a remedy ; but if we give up our *reason*, and presume to bring the *Deity* on the common stage of life, to perform *that*, by *signs* and *wonders*, which the most enlightened part of the christian world has been taught to believe, must be done by observing the *order of his providence*, and his *written law*, what can

we think? In observing the plain sense of that system of laws delivered down to us, by the *great Prince and Lawgiver, the Judge, the Saviour, and Redeemer of the world*, we are warned against every kind of delusion; and for the same reason taught to *suspect*, that *sense or honesty* is wanting in those who pretend to “*sudden and momentary acts, effecting in an instantaneous, and operating in an irresistible manner.*”

I do not speak entirely from *books*, nor *hear-say*. I will tell you what I have heard with *my own ears*, at the time that I saw the preacher.—I intended a long while since to hear Mr. *W.* at *Tottenham-court*, and I have at length compassed my design.—The *prayers* were performed with as much devotion as one generally finds at any church; and, as well as I remember, without any *excursions* foreign to the *church service*. Fame had indeed represented him to me, as a very great *orator*, but in this I was a little disappointed, not but he performs, upon the whole, *tolerably well*. The *tunes* and *concordance* of their singing are also very *proper*, and agreeable: though I thought that *psalms* or *anthems* would be better than *hymns*; or the true harmony of sense and numbers, than such *poor poetry* as was sung.

When he begun his *sermon*, the oddness of some of his *conceits*, his *manner*, and *turn of expression*, had I not been in a place of *public worship*, would have excited my *laughter*. As he went on I became *serious*, then *astonished*, and at length *confounded*, and consequently you may think

think, in a most proper disposition to enter the list of the brotherhood. But my confusion arose from a mixture of sorrow and indignation, that any man, bearing the name of a *minister of our meek and blessed Redeemer*, or the dignity of the *christian priesthood*, should demean himself like an inhabitant of *Bedlam*. I thought I saw human nature in distress, as much as in the cells of *lunatics*; with this difference, that he was permitted to go abroad, and make others as *mad* as himself; which he might be able to accomplish by means of the *credulity of his audience*, joined to the *art of making them think*, that himself and his *fraternity*, are the only people *in their senses*.

The hearts of men answer to each other, allowing for the difference in education, as a face in a *mirror*. I could not help considering, that if this preacher could make such an impression on *my imagination*, what he might do with the fancies of his audience, who, with a strong prepossession in his favor, might be led to think him *holy*, in proportion to the terror he communicated; and because *Felix* trembled at *St. Paul's doctrine*, (*which he mentioned on this occasion*) they must certainly tremble at *his*; tho' if *St. Paul* had behaved with the same indecency, I apprehend he would have been *turned out of the court*, and acquitted at once, as a *madman*. And behold on what principles the reputation of this kind of preaching is supported. "*St. Paul was, on a certain occasion, considered as a MADMAN, and even told so;*" so says this gentleman, "*am I.*" And what inference do you imagine his audience will make? Why, "*St. Paul was certainly not*

mad, therefore Mr. W. is not mad." Further, "*The preaching of the true gospel to the Gentiles was deemed foolishness, the same is said of what I preach.*" What follows then? why, his auditors will say, "*the gospel of Christ was certainly not foolishness, therefore what Mr. W. says is not foolishness, but the only true doctrine by which mankind can be saved.*" Is not this admirable logic, and wonderfully adapted to the uses of the Methodists? But it goes a great way further; for if what *he* preaches is *not foolishness*, but the *wisdom of God*, then what others preach contrary to his doctrine, is *foolishness*, and all those are in a state of damnation who listen to them. You are to understand, Sir, that damnation is as familiar a word as *præternatural*; and that these preachers, having introduced a low kind of language, by no means consistent with the dignity of the pulpit, carry their audience to *heaven*, as it were in *carts and coaches*; or tumble them into *hell* with *brooms and pitchforks*. What wonderful effects will such reasoning, and such language, have on the minds of our fellow-subjects, to promote a true sense of *christian meekness and humility, religious order and civil government*!

In another instance the preacher was very explicit: "*How,*" says he, "*can a man love God, unless he knows that God loves him; and how is he to know that God loves him, but by his feelings? And whatever may be thought of the word FEELING, it is a very significant term, and easy to be understood by those who DO feel; and do we not feel the impressions made on the mind, as well as those on the body?*"

Now

Now I must tell you, that I have been always taught to believe, “ that a true love of God was founded in a right sense of his perfections, being really amiable in themselves, and beneficial to us : and *such a love of God* will of necessity shew forth itself in our endeavoring to *practise* the same virtues ourselves, and exercise them towards *others*, which we profess to love and admire in him. Every good mind, when it reads or thinks upon the character of an *angel*, loves the *idea*, though it has no present communication with the subject, to whom such a lovely character belongs : much more the *inexhaustible* fountain of *all* perfections ; of perfections without *number*, and without *limit* : the center in which *all* excellencies unite, in which *all* glory resides, cannot but be the supreme object of *love* to a *reasonable* and *intelligent* mind.” Does Mr. *W.* consider his auditors as neither *reasonable* nor *intelligent* ? if he does, he cannot get much *credit* by them : but would he therefore talk nonsense to them, and make them *believe* they *feel this love* in their hearts, as they might do a *cudgel* on their heads ?

Indeed the common sense of mankind leads us to think, that to be *virtuous*, and to *love God*, are terms which import the same thing ; and to hope for his *love* when *we are virtuous*, seems as necessarily to follow. But this same feeling being *præternatural*, it requires *præternatural gifts*, to comprehend it.

These preachers reason in a *round* till they make themselves *giddy* ; and laying *violent* hands on every text in scripture, whether addressed to *Jew* or *Gentile*, relating to

the *Mosaic* institution, or the *christian* covenant, they torture every expression to accommodate it to their doctrine. Not attending to the imperfections of language, they do not see the necessity of making use of *figures*, even in common speech, in the ordinary affairs of life ; but determined to take every thing in a *literal* sense, which can possibly make for their *favorite opinions* ; they get poor people, as it were, within a *circle*, and keep them there by the *magic* of visionary doctrines.

• I must inform you, that opposite to this celebrated preacher, sat a dozen or more of *old women*, of that class, who within this half century might easily have been persuaded, by *threats* or *promises*, that they had rode in the air on *broomsticks* ; and confessing it, might have been put to death by people as much bewitched as themselves. And what is the case now ? These, and such like *objects of compassion*, being misguided in the sense of the scriptures, we must conclude may be more easily persuaded of a *good thing*, namely, that they have *felt the pangs of the new birth*, by violent bodily pains, or *convulsions of the spirit* : in consequence of which they also feel the *absolute assurance of everlasting felicity* ; at the very moment that their intellectual powers are so far decayed, that they do not distinguish between *receiving of alms*, in relief of their misery, and *receiving hire as hummers and hawvers*. You are to understand this as the denomination given, by many sober persons, to these *old women*, some of whom, I am assured, have *confessed*, that they are retained by hire,

hire, for *sighing* and *groaning*. Certain it is they are ready at command : and when Mr. *W.* tells them, “ *they are in a state of persecution,*” and utters a pathetic declaration, “ *that he hopes they will be permitted to return safe to their homes ;*” they, with mournful sighs, lifting up their eyes to heaven, cry, “ *pray God !*” Though this farce is *lamented* by some, and *laughed* at by others, it never entered my thoughts that Mr. *W.* is so bold in his *manœuvre*, as to risk his reputation in *actually hiring* such instruments for such purposes, notwithstanding some of these women should *think* they are hired, and declare that they are so.

I have heard, with my own ears, many things wonderful and astonishing, yet I could never bring myself to believe, that there are any such things as *love-feasts* amongst the *Methodists*, as vulgarly thought, where men and women meet at night, and extinguish their *lights*, with a view, as 'tis presumed, to follow the works of *darkness* ! Such things would never be suffered in a civilized state. But I fear that the *pretended fervent emotions of the spirit*, or the *real convulsions of the imagination*, in some weak *brothers* and *sisters*, do tend mightily to the gratification of the desires of the *flesh* : and I believe there are many *sinners*, among those who profess to have had *their new birth* ; though this is a difficulty, which, upon their principles, I have not been able to solve.

Neither can I get over certain scruples, which I have entertained concerning a false principle in morality, that

evil may be done, that *good* may come of it. If a woman were prosecuted for robbing her husband, though it were to give the money to a Methodist preacher for spiritual comfort, the laws of the land would not totally acquit her ; nor could she be innocent in the sight of God. That such tricks have been played by wives, and by relations less near than wives, I do verily believe is true : and if it is true, we may see a striking proof of the force of art and contrivance on the part of the preacher, and the fatal effects of bigotry and enthusiasm in his followers.

Though these people deal in the wonderful ; you would be as much surprized as I was if a preacher, with a grave face, should tell you, “ that seven and twenty years ago he was present, when a certain man uttered the most horrid *blasphemies* and *imprecations*, and suddenly became *speechless* ; that the dumb man made signs to him and his company, to pray with him ; that they prayed, and in *three days* the speech of the offender was restored.” Would you not imagine that it was intended to insinuate, that a *miracle* had been wrought by the instrumentality of the preacher, who uniformly ascribes the most common events, to a *miraculous interposition* ? But perhaps you would be surprized, for what *end* this supposed miracle should be wrought, or what marks of probability the story carried along with it, when the congregation was told, “ *that the man was no sooner restored to his speech, than he cursed and blasphemed just as he did before.*” But be pleased to observe, that the insinuation of the

miracle

miracle stands on its proper ground, whatever the *moral* application of the story may be.

Pray, what is it *you* understand by the *love of Christ* *constraining us*? If by the general tenor and ruling principles of *your life*, and your *belief* of the great truths contained in the New Testament, you are induced to *perform* what is *commanded*; and as far as the frailty of your nature admits, to refrain from what is *forbidden*; I presume the *love of Christ* CONSTRAINS *you*. But did it ever enter your thoughts, that a *miracle* should be wrought to induce you to *relieve* the *distressed*, or to prevent your debauching your neighbor's daughter? yet CONSTRAINT, *by the love of Christ*, according to Mr. *W.* is *præternatural*!—Is it not *præternatural*, that any man in his senses can be a *Methodist*!

In order to *serve up* as great a variety, as his fertile invention could supply, he likewise touched on the *thirty-nine articles*, and would have persuaded us, that these teach no other doctrine than his own. I have often wished that these articles were re-examined, tho' it has not been yet thought consistent with the wisdom of the state. If we consider *when* and *by whom* they were written, we must not be surprized if they convey some ambiguities, till the *whole context* is examined; and though we were at that time emerging from *gross error* and *superstition*, yet our forefathers were sufficiently right in their meaning, and Mr. *W.*'s subterfuge is a very low expedient to puzzle the *illiterate*. If you desire farther satisfaction, I recommend to your perusal, the *principles and practices of the Methodists*; and

if that pamphlet is not full enough, examine *Bishop Burnet on the thirty-nine articles*. If Mr. *W.* has a mind to impose upon his unlettered audience, I fancy he must look out for some other authority.

When once the mind of a *good-hearted or well-intentioned illiterate person*, is imprest with the *belief* of such wonder-working powers, or some strange *opinion like a belief*, (for I make a distinction) we must not be surprized at *any thing* that follows. Yet in *mercy* to his *weakness*, we ought to remind him how easily one, whose brain is hurt, *raves*, when you touch him on the string, that vibrates to his heart. And how resigned will the *poor religious* man be, in parting with the little he has, *instead of sweating under a weary life*, to purchase the reversion of heaven, and the *present* assurance of the *future* enjoyment of it !

As Mr. *W.* obliged us with a story, I will tell you a real one to the purpose above mentioned. A gentleman who had been confined in *Bedlam* for some time, was thought to have recovered his senses ; but as he was going out from thence, another unhappy person in a *raving fit*, was heard to say, “ *I am Pluto the god of hell, and I will set the world on fire.*” The other immediately catching the impression, said to his friends, “ *Don’t be afraid ; if he is PLUTO the god of hell, and sets the world on fire, I am NEPTUNE, the god of the seas ; and as I command the waters, I will put the fire out.*” You will readily conclude that the *poor gentleman* was conducted to his cell, till he should talk like a man in his senses. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

Thoughts

*Thoughts on the Methodists continued. The Danger of Enthusiasm,
with some of the supposed Causes of it.*

LETTER XXVII.

To the same.

THE doctrine and practice of the *Methodists*, having made some noise in this great town, though I had not health, nor patience, to set out above half the MINOR, at the *Hay-market*, I did not *think* the less, upon the *misfortunes* of my fellow-subjects, who are under a mental delusion. There are certainly amongst them many extreme good, and well-meaning people; and if an *honest pagan* is respectable, a *deluded christian* is much more so. Besides, there are so many articles of faith, which we hold in common with them; and so many points in morality in which there can be no difference, whilst we lament their *fanaticism*, and wish to see them in the true path, we must treat them as *fellow-christians*, and put them in it, if we can.

What the *sad* consequences of blind *zeal* and *enthusiasm* have been, in times past, may be easily deduced from *history*.—Some causes operate in the mind, and create a *distemper* as uniformly in the *moral* world, as pain, sickness, and disease, arise from irregular motions in the *animal* part of our frame and composition. As we occasionally

ally see some extraordinary GENIUS's arise in every *art* and *science*, who *promote* or *injure* the public welfare; or with a mixed character do both, alternately; uncommon efforts in religious concerns, must arise from very superior parts in distinguishing, or from gross fanaticism, or rank hypocrisy. Now if the *event* proves to the candid world, that any good is done by such efforts, we should try to benefit by such *good*, and reject the *evil* part.

It is now about a *century* since we were *mad* with *pretences to piety*; for piety it ought not to be called. After this religious frenzy, or mad hypocrisy had had its play, we returned back to the primitive *plan* of true reformation: But over-shooting the mark, we went into the other extreme, and religion was quite put out of countenance. Tired of such kind of usurpation, religion took her seat again, and the reign of more *regular equal* piety succeeded, when people thought it a duty to *worship God* in their *own houses*, as well as at *church*; and to be assured that their prayers should be offered up to him, with uninterrupted assiduity, every *great family* had a *chaplain*, and almost every little one, a stated time for prayer. This custom is still observed in some large families, in a few counties in this kingdom; but the number, upon the whole, I fear, is small: I am not happy enough to hear of more than *five* about *London*, and one of them is an *Archbishop's*. Upon discontinuing so laudable a practice, and, we may suppose, thinking *lightly* of the intention of it, a furious inundation of *profligacy* broke in, especially upon the *vulgar*. At length some of these,
whose

whose fire had carried them the farthest in *wickedness*, became the greatest *pietists*, resolving to devote themselves to *religion*, as strongly as they had been devoted to work iniquity, and under the stile and title of *Methodists*, to pray *literally, without ceasing*.

To tell you my real thoughts, it seems as if the neglect of this custom of *prayers in families* was one of the causes why so many lived as *without God in the world*; and that others having deviated into the opposite extreme, run mad with *religion*. It is reasonable to believe, that seeing many neglectful of their duty, and having more piety than judgment, they drew very hasty conclusions, with regard to the *common faith professed*, as well as the *common practice of the multitude*. Excluding reason, which they had so much violated, they seem inclined to reform away *common sense*; and under the disguise of a *new doctrine* and *superlative sanctity*, to introduce *papal* ignorance and superstition.

In *Cromwell's* time, it is well known, that the *Papish* clergy, disguised as *Reformers*, found their way to our pulpits, and we must not be surprized, if the same should happen again, amongst the *Methodists*. And a preacher, though conscious he is *no saint*, may have art enough to make his followers think that he is one; and false piety may thus undermine *true religion*. We often see as absurd constructions of the scriptures, on *religious* principles, as of *toleration* on political ones: and *zeal* and *impudence* sometimes operate in the same way. The love of novelty, and our common liberty, frequently occasion
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great credulity ; and *our daring genius* turns us to whatever our *imagination*s suggest : whilst a mind softened by a sense of guilt, and terrified by an *enthusiastic* preacher, is open to every appearance that is *specious*.

There are many causes for such doctrines being adopted ; and a careful examination of them will point out the *great evils* that attend them. “ If,” says an ingenious writer, “ to this newness in the *manner* there is added a little of the marvellous in the *matter*, its power of affecting will increase, and it will be received with more avidity of attention, proportionably to the *quantity* of the wonderful it contains. When the *Methodists* harangue their swains in the country, they are well attended : but St. *Francis*, when he preached to the *swallows* was attended much better. A *Methodist*, when he preaches up salvation by *faith* alone, will draw numbers about him : if he does it in the utmost latitude of the *Antinomian* principle, and to the absolute exclusion of *all works*, he may be expected to draw much greater : but should any one undertake to bring all the *sheep* and *asses* in the fields to hear him, as the above-mentioned *saint* is said to have done, I would lay money on his side that he out-does them both.

Some oblique strokes of satire on the indolence, self-interest and corruption of modern preachers, will likewise take mightily with the populace, and never fail to raise the *Methodists* in their esteem. No diversion tickles the fancy of the Mob so much, as when one of their *bettors* is brought in to be *baited*. If it be one of the worldly-

worldly-minded clergy, who minds the fleece more than the flock, the pleasure is much improved, and the triumph is considerably heightened. A *Jew* or a *Relapse* will pretty well satisfy the appetite of some popish countries, but we cannot give the rabble here, a higher treat, than by serving up one of the clergy for their entertainment.

The doctrines of free-grace, election, and reprobation will also be wonderful, and always pleasing to a popular audience. The gracious distribution of spiritual gifts, without any regard to the merit or qualification of those to whom they are given: the rank to which the man of low degree on earth is to be advanced, as one of the *elect* or *favorites* of heaven; the general and indiscriminating denunciation of woe against those, who *in their life-time have received their good things*; these topics never fail to engage the attention, and gain the applause from those of the lower class; and they will please the more in the hands, and under the skilful direction of a master, who can illustrate them in that familiar way which is level to the capacity of all his hearers; and in which the Methodist preachers are allowed so much to excel.

As it may be difficult to abstract low and groveling minds from the grossness of material things, it may be, and has often been dangerous to the public peace, to raise in the vulgar too high notions of their favor and interest in heaven: for whatever description of spiritual rewards, or images of celestial happiness may be set before them, I much doubt whether they will not direct their thoughts to mere objects of sense; will not swell with the expectation

tion of earthly blessings, and plume themselves on the value of those reverfionary poffeffions, which will fall to their fhare, *when the faints come to inherit the earth.*

Nor is it a fmall recommendation of thefe doctrines to the *common people*, that as every thing is reprefented to be done for them, by the all-fufficient merits of a Saviour, little or nothing is underftood to remain that can be *properly* done by themfelves. Obligations of duty are in a great meafure fuperseded; attention to behave properly under all the various relations of life, is held by many to be unnecessary; any attempts to improve in virtuous living may be deemed prefumptuous by fome, and as acts of an arrogant felf-righteoufnefs; or probably the *dangerous artifices of Satan* to feduce them from the right way of falvation."

You fee, *Sir*, in what ftrong terms the ingenious and reverend author has pointed out feveral caufes obvious to the experience of mankind; and it is certain, that under a notion of pre-eminence in fanctity, they may open a door to great errors and confufion.—Let us lament our fins in duft and afhes, and exert all the energy of our fouls to worship GOD in *fpirit* and in *truth*; to devote our lives to his fervice, and to pray for his affiftance; but let fuch affiftance come in the way that he fhall think fit to give it. Surely this doctrine of *Methodifm* cannot, in the iffue, be productive of *good*.

With regard to improvements in morality, what fay the Methodifts themfelves? The beft account I can find, is this. One of them fays "there are many magiftrates in
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this city * and kingdom in general, I believe, who can remember what the bulk of the common people of *England* were about *twenty* years ago. In and about *London* particularly, nothing were more frequent than murders and robberies in the streets, and highways; but let these magistrates be asked now, and I dare swear they will confess, that things have been upon the mending hand ever since, till at length the lower class of people are reduced to a *regularity* and *good behavior*, that is not to be paralleled in the inhabitants of any *nation upon earth*, where the numbers are so *great*, and the metropolis so *extensive*."—He goes on,

"Now I would be glad to know, to what this happy change has been owing? Shall I venture to answer? to a sense of religion, which for these last twenty years has been growing among the commonalty: a sense which has restrained their natural dissoluteness, corrected the defects of education, and opened their understanding to hear and believe the word of God in the scriptures."—

Suppose we grant the *Methodist* all this; various causes may have concurred: and as we know there are some *bad* Methodists, they must grant us, that there are *some few moral* people, amongst the poor, who are *not* *Methodists*; and does it follow that the same, or much greater good, might not be done with the same zeal, by preaching the *plain doctrine of christianity*, which promises the *same rewards*, and threatens the *same punishments*, hereafter. If nothing can be done but by *miracle*, we may

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* *London and Westminster.*

as well refer ourselves to the miraculous care of heaven, and not sow our fields, nor plant our gardens. Piety is too good a thing for people to be *cheated* into it; but if those very pietists discover their delusion, gross *impiety* will probably follow. The very cause of virtue is injured, when a *lie* is invented to support it, and the consequence of a *falsity* is, that the bulk of mankind are apt to blend the *virtuous* and the *vicious* together, and impute *all appearance of religion*, to *hypocrisy* or *madness*.

Accordingly we see, that those who are *not Methodists* despise and ridicule those who *are*; whilst the Methodists themselves, in spite of all their piety, are taught to give up their *fellow-subjects*, and *fellow-christians*, as children of *perdition*: so that upon the examination of this whole matter, the good done to the *common people* of these kingdoms, for it is not confined to this *metropolis*, I am afraid is not so great as this gentleman imagines.

What is *good*, will stand the test: what is *not good*, or founded in *error*, cannot be of *divine* original. Can any doctrine be more pure and simple, than that of the established religion, *regular, even, consistent*; founded in the most substantial learning, and the truest piety? And is there not room to suspect that those who have been successful in promoting the *morality* they pretend to, by means of this new faith, which other divines do not teach, are intoxicated with notions of their own *importance*? And if these people reject communion with their neighbors, desert the pastor of their parish, and vilify the preachers of the gospel, on this account, and as it were in con-

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tempt of the established religion ; are not these great *evils*, *morally* and *politically* considered ; and do not the *Methodists* counteract the very *sobriety* they pretend to ?

Modesty leads men to suspect the fallacy of their own judgment, in cases where the highest authority is opposed to them, if the reasons advanced are very *forcible*. Tho' these may not carry conviction, against prejudices in favor of new doctrines, the principles which promote *public peace*, *good order*, and *national felicity*, must be entitled to a much fairer examination, than the *Methodists* chuse to bestow. From the moment people reason *unfairly*, or advance as facts that which they can give no testimony of but their own *assertions*, in all common concerns of life there is room for *suspicion of falsehood*. The real miracles of the first ages, if I may be allowed to mention them in the same sentence, were supported by very *different* kind of evidence, than any of the wonderful illuminations which the *Methodists* pretend to.

And what says the historian, of the *Montanists*, who pretended to just the same kind of wonders as the *Methodists* ? Speaking of *Montanus* their leader, he says, “ They deemed what they saw in him as the true effect of the *Holy Ghost*, and were thereby lifted up with extreme vanity and confidence, as if nothing could be greater and higher than his dispensation : and he being *ravished* with the honor of seeing himself so esteemed, and listened to, used *divers artifices and stratagems* to draw in others, and some *sober and sincere christians* followed him. He looked on the *governors of the church* as much *degenerated*, invested

only with an *outward* character: HE *had more of the SPIRIT than all of them*, and by virtue of his *extraordinary mission*, would be exempted from the inspection of his rightful superiors, whose standing rules must give way to whatever was taken for a *prophetic impetus*. *Montanus*, intoxicated with these *high* notions, *went up and down*, and drew after him several *religious melancholists*. Several of the weaker sex, excited by his *high pretensions*, were seized upon by the same spirit; as *Priscilla* and *Maximilla*, who no sooner were touched by the *power* in *Montanus*, but immediately they left their *husbands*, fancying that henceforwards they were to be espoused to none but *Christ*. They accordingly fancied themselves *heavenly virgins*, espoused by *Christ*, who personally visited them, conversing with them as one friend converses with another. — Thus led on with a *false faith*, and puffed up beyond measure, they fell into sundry snares, and easily mistook the *imagination*s of their own hearts, for the *pure inspiration* of the *divine Spirit*.”

What a picture is this! — The love of *order, peace, and harmony* are confessedly the truest *criteria*s to judge of a *disciple of Jesus Christ*: and though I presume the Almighty, requires of us, in our *different stations of life*, the same devotion of the heart, there is no exact number of hours required to be spent in prayer. But if things are carried such lengths, that an audience is admonished to beware of the *public worship* and religion of their country, it is high time to check a doctrine, which appears to have nothing but the most confident assertions of incredibilities to support it.

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It has generally appeared to me, that as the faults of a *servant* are often owing to the imprudence or folly of the *master*, so the faults of our *clergy* are imputable in a great measure to the *laity*; sometimes by *expecting too much service of them*, and at others by our *sitting down satisfied with too little*. But the *Methodists* aspire at having “wise and just men, who have only the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind in view, without any prospect of worldly power, pleasure, or profit to themselves;” and they require also that they should be endowed with *præternatural powers from heaven*, such as I apprehend God has not been pleased to grant to the sons of men, since the first periods of the *christian æra*. And where are such *clergy*? where indeed are such *men* upon the face of the whole earth, even without these gifts? I fear the number is very small: the *Methodist preachers* do not appear to be such *wise*, nor such *disinterested* men. On the contrary, if a minister thinks himself authorized to utter such *familiar vulgar discourse* from the pulpit, as is not fit for the plow-tail, though it may gain him followers, and *turn him to account*, it is a question if the event may not be very injurious; and instead of promoting the true glory of God amongst men, if it will not cast a dark cloud on religion, bring a nation into contempt, and draw down the resentments of heaven. And supposing the devotion of the *pastor* to be ever so *sincere*, if it is dissonant to the *laws of the land*, and the true spirit of a *free government*, upon our plan, it will hardly stand the test of being agreeable to the *laws of God*; for these ge-

nerally act reciprocally on each other. *True religion* can hardly subsist without *such a government*; and I believe no such government can subsist without true religion.

In the mean while, every circumstance which brings on discord or confusion in PUBLIC, or *distress* in *private life*, may be suspected as not founded in *truth*. To maintain the peace and good order of this world, as preparatory to the happiness of the *next*, is one of the chief precepts of our great *Lord and Master*, as we find in almost every passage of the *New Testament*. Therefore if we mean to promote that *charity*, and *benevolence* which his religion requires, we shall be naturally led to consider the *purity*, *simplicity*, and *integrity* of our plan of government; the great lenity in the executive part of it; the majestic simplicity which accompanies the true *protestantism* of the *church of England*: and the admirable correspondency of this, with the purity and benignity of the christian religion.

Unless we *allow* ourselves to be as *ignorant* and illiterate as *Pagans*; or acknowledge the *præternatural* illuminations pretended to by the *Methodists*, we must argue on these principles, though no arguments should prevent those who are possessed of the opinion of these illuminations, from believing in them. Great reverence is due to government on the most approved principles of all religions; but the *beauty* and *truth* of ours are very obvious: and if the conduct of any subject clashes with it; under a false notion of *sanctity*, they will injure the thing we have the most reason to triumph in. The

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Methodist preachers understand this doctrine in part, but they *contradict* themselves; *that is*, they profess to honor the KING, but they vilify the clergy, of whom the king is the *head*.

It must be granted, that it is a very great happiness for a preacher to *read* with a true emphasis; to have a good utterance; and above all to *feel* what he *speaks*, whether he *preaches* or *prays*; for it is thus, and perhaps thus only, that he can make others feel it. Where there is no passage to the heart, but by way of the *passions*, these must be addressed from the pulpit, or the audience will be left just where they were found; but we must observe that sound *doctrine* and substantial piety are frequently without the gift of *oratory*, as oratory is sometimes without *sense*.

I lay it down as a maxim, that we may learn something from every body, were it only in marking their *inattention* to what belongs to their rank and office. No *christian* can dispute, but that a preacher of the *gospel of Christ* is of the noblest profession in the world:—why is it not still more *respected amongst us*? I will tell you my opinion: it is because the *laity*, no matter upon what foundation, are afraid of introducing *ecclesiastical pride and dominion*, the clergy, in the mean while, not generally doing themselves justice in their *manner* of addressing their audience, to excite that *reverence*, which is best calculated to spread the influence of piety, and create an awful sense of religion, and love and respect for themselves, as preachers of the gospel, or messengers from heaven. They

seem also to be suspicious of themselves in regard to the imputation of singularity, when they are not conscious that they affect any. This curbs the genius of many zealous and able preachers: and lest they should degenerate into *enthusiasm*, or apply themselves to the *passions only*, I think they often appear *too cold* and *languid*, when they apply to our *reason* only.

The bulk of mankind are almost necessarily illiterate; but they are not therefore disinclined to religion: On the contrary, there is in the human mind a natural propensity to religion; and the most unlettered know so much, that the soul of the *peasant* is as precious, in the sight of *God*, as the soul of the *prince*. That the same God is addressed in the humble village-church, as in the solemn city-temple, and may be worshiped with as pure a heart. And it is not less obvious, that if preaching is consistent with *truth*, right reason, the scriptures, and the *dignity of the pulpit*, the prince will be edified by what the *peasant* understands.

But were some preachers, men of sense and candor, to ask themselves this simple question; “ *Have I made any considerable impression on my audience to-day?* ” the answer would often be in the *negative*. Many a well-meaning man, who is conscious of being *careless*, or has some *insuperable impediment*, would frequently confess this opinion of himself; not so much from the fault of his audience, as his own. The next question is, “ *To what purpose do I preach?* ” Part of the answer is, “ *To get my own bread:* ” yet as an honest man he means
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also to do his duty in the double capacity of a *teacher*, and a *christian* : and as he can never be in want of the best digested discourses ; let his parts be ever so inferior, speaking of him as a *clergyman*, he may model them to the capacities of his audience, at least among the *lower classes* of the people ; and consequently nothing will remain for him to do, as to the business in question, more than to *study* and *practise* the most efficacious *manner of preaching*.

But whatever complaints the *laity* may make, I have seen and observed the conduct of ecclesiastics in many other countries ; and I do assure you, that as ours appears to be the purest religion, our clergy are incomparably the most respectable of any in the world : and in this view I include the *Dissenting* ministers, as well as the *Episcopalians*. And how many great men, and glorious examples, are there amongst them, where the most solid eloquence is displayed in sentiments and language superior to the greatest masters of antiquity, who declaimed on worldly matters. What can affect the mind of man so deeply as the considerations which are commensurate with *eternity* ! How does the heart expand itself, and the tongue exert an angelic energy, in proportion as the divine excellencies of the great Creator and Lord of heaven, are superior to all created Beings on earth ! No subject can be so interesting to man, as the immortality of his soul ; and the eloquence which flows from the great truths of christianity, raise our ideas to the sublimest heights which they are capable of. “ Our clergy,” says an ingenious writer, “ have no farther to look for an example of the

perfection they may arrive at, than to St. *Paul's* harangues*; that when he, under the want of several advantages of nature (as himself tells us) was heard, admired, and made a standard to succeeding ages, by the best judge of a different persuasion in religion: I say, our clergy may learn that, however instructive their sermons are, they are capable of receiving a great addition, which St. *Paul* has given them a noble example of; and the christian religion has furnished them with the certain means of obtaining it." But may we therefore descend to the vulgar, so far as to *rant* and *rave*? No: the humblest villager can judge of what is decorous, natural, and harmonious, better than to be *pleased* or *instructed*, though he may be *frightened* and *confounded* by such demeanor; and there is reason to suspect that nothing but ignorance and superstition can engage him to love or revere the preacher. But if the preacher *gains* by the ignorance and superstition of his auditors, then we may resolve the whole, with respect to himself, into low art and iniquitous contrivance to render *even the supposed word of God*, subservient to worldly ends.

Our common people are said to be the most dissolute in the world, particularly in and about *London*: the Methodists say this. For my own part, I believe they are not so bad as is imagined; but they would certainly be *less dissolute*, if they were told in *stronger terms*, and with

* *Viz.* His reasonings upon idolatry at *Athens*. His discourse on the resurrection to the *Corinthians*. His harangue before *Agrippa* on his own conversion, and the necessity of that of others, &c.

with more emphasis, what infinite danger there is in being *wicked*; and what joys there are in the *hopes* of heaven, even without that *certainty* of it, which the *Methodists* fondly pretend to: and if a man's talents be as properly adapted to the pulpit, as the actors to the stage, and he learns his part as well; the reality opposed to the fiction, and the greater importance of it, must give him a vast superiority. Whatever the *Methodists* may pretend, the clergy of all denominations should conclude, that the influence of a preacher must be expected to arise from *study* and *attention*, not from *illumination*, *preternatural* assistance, or a medley of reason and nonsense, uttered with vehemence and vociferation.

But it ought moreover to be observed, how impossible it is, on the present plan, to do justice to *all* the common people, in every part of this kingdom. How many instances are there, where *one* minister supplies *two, three, or four* villages at several miles distance! If we mean to *curb enthusiasm*, we must rectify this error where it prevails. If the minister must gallop over the *service*, as he gallops over the *ground* from one church to another; and if the church is often without any *service* at all, what will be the *consequence*?

Farther, in order to avoid the pageantry of the church of *Rome*, we get into a habit of indifference with regard to common external decency. How many places of divine worship have I seen, where one may almost literally say, that the winds whistle through the broken walls, as well as the broken windows; and where the
venerable

venerable roof nods over the heads of the congregation, as if it meant to crush them into their original clay, to make bricks of, towards rebuilding their church : whilst the proudest monuments of human art, even our most solemn temples, except it be on *Sundays*, who is it frequents them ? *half a dozen antient maids, and as many decrepid widows*. It is true, one evil has been lately corrected by the prudence and piety of the clergy : it is not long since that the *din* made *without* the choir, even of *St. Paul's cathedral*, confounded those *within* it, when they were at their devotions.

I would not have you imagine, that I am so unfortunate as not to see a great deal of real devotion : I only seek for some of the obvious causes, why so many of the people, who are so *violently* inclined to piety, run after *new* doctrines and *new* preachers, merely as these seem to be in *earnest* : we see *their absurdities* are followed, when *truths*, the most interesting to mankind, are often neglected.

Indeed, to consider religion in general, we do not appear to be affected in practice, equal to the enlightened age we live in ; though our knowledge serves to show us, what *we should not be* ; and among other things, that the opinions of *Methodists* are the very *dregs of ignorance and credulity*, and the genuine produce of *enthusiasm*.

Whatever *mischievous* effects may attend *Methodism*, I believe it has done *some good*, so far as zeal and attention operate ; and their preachers have grounded their hopes of success, and *persevere* upon this very principle. But

as if they were conscious they had no other ground to stand upon, they *over-act* their part, and deliver their oracles with a monstrous vociferation; and instead of exciting devotion among such as have *common sense*, they create *contempt*, and expose themselves to the laughter of the *illiterate*, and do a general *injury* to religion.

But this is not the only thing we complain of. A *Bridewell*, or a *Blue-coat* boy in garments like a girl's petticoat, or a gallant seaman *on shore*, hampering his legs in *trousers*, tho' custom may render them familiar, and they may be esteemed as honorable badges; yet in the eye of reason *these* appearances create laughter: but it is no subject of laughter to see a man assuming the *prerogatives* of a *black gown*, and under the notion of being an *instructor sent from God*, departing from *sense*, *reason*, and the *scriptures*, assembling a number of poor people to listen to the rants of enthusiasm, and by the force of their affections dancing them about in a string like *puppets*. This is a subject of *sorrow*, and to guard the *poor* from being so imposed upon, is a duty of real moment which we owe them. If we pretend to guard the liberties and property of our fellow-subjects, and do not point out to them their danger from preachers, who teach a doctrine which we apprehend is not from *heaven*, we shall not do them that justice, which every true patriot must wish and endeavor to promote.

Whatever may be pretended, with regard to the *force* of *novelty* on the minds of the vulgar, it would be a *melancholy* case indeed, if the pulpit was to be modelled, as
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the *stage* sometimes is, to the whims, the *corruption* or *folly* of mankind.—Fools and madmen there ever will be, and the man who is mad thro' an excess of piety, may do as much mischief as he who is *outrageously criminal*, not having *any piety at all*. The community in both cases is in danger: with regard to the first, his *disease* seems to be the least pernicious, considered as an *individual*, but *conjunctively*, with a multitude, it may be the most *dangerous*, as being least practicable to subdue: for every honest man will unite to check the extravagancies of the irreligious madman; but the other seems to be the least *curable*. Let us try to preserve our *reason*, and adore the God that gave it! But if such constructions of the scriptures, as the *Methodists* make, do pass current with mankind, I am afraid that *reason* and *christianity* will take their leave of the world together, and leave us bewildered in darkness! FAREWEL.

Thoughts

Thoughts on the Methodists continued, with Observations on their new Birth, and also on theatrical Exhibitions in Matters of Faith.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the same.

WHEN I wrote to you last, I thought I had exhausted my subject; but I find that, in my former letters, I only touched upon the point, which is of the greatest moment amongst the Methodists. You have heard much talk about *their New Birth*, and it has excited my attention. I hope you remember so much of your *catechism*, that part of the answer upon the question of *baptism* is, “*a death unto sin, and a NEW BIRTH unto righteousness.*” But I find that St. Paul writing to the *Romans*, says, “*Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*” And this emblem of *dying with Christ*, and rising with him again, to walk in *newness of life*, is, I suppose, the *new birth*, so far as it is applicable to us, who are *already christians*; but among the Methodists it is something *præternatural*.

A change of *life and manners*, with respect to the *moral world*, in the most *familiar idiom of our language*, is
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becoming a *new creature*. Change of *spirit*, with regard to a *spiritual state*, is called a *new birth*, by analogy with our *natural birth*, which first gave us bodies and a *material substance*. But if any imagine they feel the *pangs of regeneration*, as a power agitating their souls, or that they are in a state of *impeccability* after this *new birth*, they may subject themselves to the imputation of frenzy, as much as if they were to pretend to be *invulnerable*; or to maturity of knowledge in infancy; or to know the *time* and place of their *nativity*, with every thing that passed at it, without being informed of any one circumstance. The *Methodists* generally pretend to tell the *time* and *place* of their *regeneration*: if they mean that they were struck with a sense of religion, at any certain time, in any *extraordinary* manner, and more than they ever were before, it may be true: and if they would let it rest here, their notion might be intelligible, and we might agree. But this does not satisfy their *religious breathings*. They carry this notion to the heights I have mentioned above.

I had once occasion to ask a young woman what prayers she used: her answer was, “*that those who had the NEW BIRTH had no occasion for any FORM of prayer,*” which was the same to me as if she had said, “*I am a Methodist arrived to a sinless state.*” What a desirable secret is this, in which the most illiterate come to such perfection by *inward impressions*! Yet if one may be allowed to judge from their *writings*, there is a *schism* among them, with regard to their capacity of sinning after the *new birth*. Some maintain that they *cannot sin*; others know

know the contrary by sad experience. The question then is, have the *sinners* really had the *new birth*, as they imagined? — This is a knotty point, which can never be clearly decided by them. If they mean to talk the language of reason and common sense, all that can be said is, that there may be in the *best men* such an uniformity in their *thoughts* and *actions*; they may be so *habitually obedient to their reason*, as to be *free*, speaking as men, from false biases and corrupt inclinations, and so far they *cannot sin*; as a good man *cannot* do an *evil action*, *that is*, CANNOT do it consistently with his principles as a *good man*. Where *good men* have arrived to any considerable degree of *perfection*, it is declared of them that they *cannot sin**; which expression, the whole context being considered, can possibly signify no more than having the *liberty* of their minds *so perfect*, that allowing for the unavoidable infirmities of human nature, they are not in *great danger* of being *seduced*.

The character which the *evangelical doctrine* relates to, can belong but to very few, and can be the reward only of an *unwearied* perseverance. But this is not what the *Methodists* mean. Those only can understand their meaning, who have the same *feelings* as themselves; and having the same *feelings*, they may think they have found a *meaning*, though it be only a *fanciful opinion* of some power working in their minds, which if it were, as many of them *say*, it would be *præternatural* indeed; but unless we suppose that miracles are wrought in favor of
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* Vid. 1st John iii. 9.

every convert, when no man in his senses, presumes to say but that *converts* may be made *without miracles*, we may as fairly *conclude* that there is rank *delusion* and *enthusiasm* in the belief of the *Methodists*.

Let us set this question in the fairest point of view, that every child may see and judge of it. It was not long since that a preacher in a Methodist pulpit delivered himself to this effect. “ My friend had lived an *exemplary life*; his conduct, humanly speaking, was unexceptionable: being on his death-bed, he was asked *if he had not the feelings of the certainty of future bliss*; he answered, no: adding, that his spirits were frequently very low; however, *that he believed in the promises of the gospel*; *that his hopes were founded in them*; and that he trusted in *the mercies of God through the merits of Jesus Christ*.” What would the *Methodists* make of this man? Was he too a son of reprobation? Was the preacher *no Methodist*? or are the *Methodists* coming-about?

Upon *their principles*, they must set down seriously to prove, *that even with such belief, such hope, and such trust, after a well-spent life, this man, not having the FEELINGS in question, was not converted, nor consequently in a state of salvation*. There are, it seems, *certain feelings* by which they can judge if they are *regenerate* or not. Now, I presume, if a man does not know that he has *such feelings*, he cannot be said to have them; and without them I suppose he has no *assurance* of his *conversion*, and without *assurance* of his *conversion*, he cannot entertain any other hope of his *salvation*, than that his con-
version

version (so characterised as the Methodists would have it be) must *first come*. Now if it comes not, I should be glad to know, *what the situation of the man is?* I suppose there is no other proof of conversion, and that it is common to all the *converted*. If there is *any other proof*, *what do they allow such proof to be?* May a man be in a state of salvation *without this feeling?* If he may, why this mighty stress laid upon it? If he *cannot* be in this state without it, then the *preacher's friend* was not in such a state, notwithstanding his *faith* and *good works*. Strange and wonderful indeed! Methodism must surely be a bad rule of faith, if it shuts such men out of paradise! If we *must not reason*, we may adopt *Judaism*, *Mahomedanism*, or *Paganism*, as well as *Christianity*: but even with regard to these faiths, we find that *reason* was not given to no end, or as if the great judge of mankind will make no appeal, at the *day of account*, to that which is to the spirit of man, what the eye is to his body; he cannot possibly find his way without it.

Can you tell me, if, according to the Methodists, there must be an *assurance* of the *favor of God* to entitle a man to that favor? If a favor is granted before he knew any thing of the matter, which I presume must be the case, suppose he were never to know it till he enjoys it, would it be less *his*, or less a *favor*, or render him the *less* happy? But if he *presumes* that such favor is certainly granted him, does he not act, or think, diametrically contrary to the *meekness*, the *humility*, and resignation which characterises *christianity*? Upon my word, Sir,

these pretended good christians seem to set the whole christian doctrine at war with itself. Their presumptions reverse the declaration of *Christ*: they seem to justify the *pharisee* rather than the *publican*. Happy will it be to find our way to heaven by the means that the preacher, whom I have quoted, declared of his *dying friend*!

Whilst these people decry *reason*, they seem ignorant that they are either aspiring to the state of angels, or sinking themselves to a level with *beasts*. But let them exalt their *faith* and notions of *illuminations* ever so high, the *scriptures* remain just as they were before: and let us remember, that we are neither more, nor less than *men*; and as such, one may indeed say, CORRUPTION *thou art my father*; and thou, O WORM, *art my sister*! But, O RIGHTEOUS and OMNISCIENT GOD, *thou hast stamp'd thy image on my soul, by the faculties with which thou hast endowed it. Thou hast graciously revealed thy will, and given me powers to understand what thou requirest of me. Let me not efface that image, by any vain or arrogant opinion; but teach me to cultivate my reason, thy first great gift, that by it I may be led to faith in thy Being and Attributes, and participate in the glorious redemption which thou hast appointed. Let me feel the efficacy of thy goodness, in my life and conversation; and receive the influence of thy power in the way most agreeable to thy incomprehensible wisdom, though I should not understand the manner of its operation; for in thee, all knowledge, power, and glory centre, for ever and ever!*

The true paths of felicity are not difficult to find; they are pointed out by *God himself*: but if men will be *lazy*

or

or *frantic*, passively immoral, or actively iniquitous against the light of *reason* and *revelation*, it is no wonder to see them *bewildered*. In the mean time, we often behold great *sinners* aspire at being great *saints*. Their imaginations are strong, and unhabituated to the measure of the human powers; and *breathing* after righteousness, are not contented with the ordinary means of grace: whilst others, of a different complexion, require to be flogged with religious admonitions, before they can feel any *impressions*. Suppose a man, in the first case, should pretend to walk always on *tiptoe*, when nature intended him to walk on the flat of his feet, we should not be surprized if he *tumbled*. If *reason*, *revelation*, and *obedience* are not sufficient guides, without the *sensible operations of the Spirit of God* working in our hearts, my wonder is, that this sensible operation should be found among so few *wise* and good men, who labor with all their powers to subdue their wills to the divine law, and exert all their strength to discharge their duty to God, in the manner most agreeable to his written law. It is indeed so amazing, that we must either conclude that a *new revelation* has been made known to these people, as the *true elect*, as they call themselves; or that their pretences are the effects of rank *folly* and *delusion*: and if their lives and discourses corroborate this opinion, then we shall cease to wonder that so few persons of education or sentiment, give-in to their principles.

In the mean time the *Methodists* read the *scriptures*, though they do not understand them; and whilst they

are misguided by such absurd constructions, many of those who *laugh at them* do not appear to have read them at all. I wish the *principles* of the Methodists may be understood more clearly by being brought on the *stage*. I question if the character of the *bawd*, in the *MINOR*, has any existence, having found from the honest declarations of some, who are only simple prostitutes, that they seldom trouble the church, or think about worshipping God, in any place. If this character does *not* exist, then the whole fabric of the *drama* is built on false grounds: if it *does* exist, is it so proper a subject for the theatre, as for *St. Luke's Hospital*? This dramatic piece may possibly intimidate some from becoming *Methodists*, but however *popular* it may be, I am very doubtful concerning the *propriety* of the measure, as to the end of correcting the *enthusiasm* in question. It is wittily said indeed, that this comedy "has shaken the pillars of *Tottenham tabernacle*;" and I must add, that I believe no harm would happen were it to *tumble*, provided the poor people who frequent it, were at their *work*, or saying their prayers in their parish-churches. But my apprehensions are, that whilst we deride the *abuse* of the scriptures, the *scriptures themselves* will not be thought of at all, or treated too *familiarly*.

Never was useful learning at a greater height: never was there an age more enlightened: never did the powers of reason beam forth, and the knowledge of the scriptures shine brighter than at this time; it is therefore amazing that people should run after such conceits

as the Methodists adopt. But, for the same reason, if the clergy use the *weapons* which the *scriptures* furnish them with; and by gentle and persuasive means, exerting the powers of *reason* and genuine faith, the benevolence that humanity dictates, and the zeal which christianity inspires, they might find medicines for this *fever*, as they often do, I hope, for the *cold-fit* in religion.

Theatrical entertainments do not extend to one in a *hundred* of those who are in most need of correction. And for the same reason that one may easily observe a very fatal propensity to favor those *scenes* which are *loose* and *immoral*, there is too much cause to apprehend that *dramatic* performances relating to *mistakes in religion*, will, at the same time they excite *laughter*, diminish the awe of those *tremendous* considerations which already make much too faint *an impression*. The erroneous opinions which prevailed, when our Saviour was on earth, though of the most *inveterate* kind, were refuted by *reason*, *argument*, and appeals to the common sense and consciences of men, as well as by *miracles*. And can any one think that ridicule is the test of truth, though it sometimes leads to the discovery of it? And are not *characters* often worked up beyond truth, when it is meant, to render a theatrical *representation* agreeable? I cannot undertake to determine but that this piece may have done some good; but I do not like this *mode* of reforming the *Methodists*. Perhaps I should have been better reconciled, if some character of a *sensible man*, with a masculine piety, and resolution to *act the true chri-*

lian, were set in contrast with the *foolish* or *wicked* characters in the *drama*, that there might be something to *please*, as well as something to *laugh* at; for with regard to myself, I am not inclined to *laugh*, when I am not *pleased*; and I lament the *mental* delusion of an *innocent* person, as I feel for the bodily sufferings of a guilty one. We do not laugh at *madmen*; nor do we refuse to give milk to those who cannot digest other food.

If the *theatre* becomes a corrector in any matter of faith, is there not *some danger* of turning *faith* in general into a *comedy* or a *farce*? This is what I should be afraid of, were such representations to be much countenanced. For you must have observed, that this nation in general, is apt to be as *whimsical* in their fashions, as the *Methoïsts* in the particular cut of their *piety* and *faith*: and whim and fancy of one kind, being opposed to whim and fancy of another, reason and religion may possibly be put between *two fires*, and wounded on both sides.

It ought to be farther considered, that if ample *pecuniary* emoluments are drawn from such representations, as there is the stronger inducement for some to exhibit them, there is the stronger reason for others to be jealous of the consequences of such exhibitions. And though I do not pretend that any mischief is *yet* done, I would guard against evils which probably may happen hereafter.

As to the *peruke* and *shoemaker declaimers*, whose recommendation is consummate impudence, warm imaginations, and the remembrance of texts which they have no capacity to understand, it would be an indignity offered

ferred to the christian priesthood to call such persons *teachers*, or *preachers* of the gospel. And as to the *gentlemen* of methodistical tenets, who have had a scholastic education, how few amongst them are there, who would not *face about to the RIGHT*, for the consideration of a good ecclesiastical *benefice*! I have very *particular reasons* to believe the major part of them would conform to church orthodoxy, and *intelligible* christianity, if they did not find a better *living* in another way. And what do you think of the *heroes* of the stage, whose *calling* it is, to represent all things that *are*, and all things which *are not* in nature: will *they* not turn to the *right* hand or to the *left*, as the humour or taste of the spectator inclines. Upon my word, Sir, I am much afraid that the glittering imagination of a crowded benefit-night, might induce many of them to say whatever the poet should put in their mouths; and many improper things, levelled against errors in faith, may inadvertently slip the *examination* of dramatic writings. In short, though I love the stage under restrictions, I think we shall be wonderfully changed, if *actors* become exemplary enough in their lives and manners, to induce us to commit the guardianship of any part of our *faith* to their custody.

Besides, we may *amuse* ourselves, but the *Methodists* are visionary enough to look on themselves, as one of their writers calls them, “ a peculiar people, planted by the hand of God in the midst of a very wicked, sinful, and rebellious generation.”— And will the theatre induce them to believe they are *absurd*, enthusiastic, or *sin-*

ful? We may also *imagine*, that this kind of public *ridicule* will drive them out of their *whims*: will it not rather make them *considerable* in their own opinion, by being thus taken notice of?

One of their advocates says, “ The *Devils* may, and in all probability do mimic and ridicule the *Angels*; but are those blessed spirits therefore ridiculous in themselves?”

—This is an odd conceit, and like some of their other fancies. I suppose the *Methodists* stand here in the place of *angels*: but one might with as little impropriety ask the author, if he thinks there is any *stage-playing* in the dominions of *Lucifer*? It may at the same time be worthy of notice, that whilst these people condemn the stage as an abomination, without regard to the subject, or conduct of a play, or whether the *poet* or the *actor* be chaste or not, their preachers imitate the meanest underlings of the *buskin tribe*; and whilst the poet never intends to leave the understanding out of the question, their preachers often neglect it totally.

We all agree, that these enthusiasts would increase by *persecution*; and what do they judge this theatrical representation to be? One of them tells us, “ it is no small honor, and should be a great comfort to the *Methodists*, that they are treated in a manner so much resembling the treatment of the *primitive christians*!” He goes on; “ but the *Methodists* are *enthusiasts*, so the *primitive christians* were also called; nay, the very apostles themselves did not escape that opprobrious term*.” You see how they

* See page 545. in relation to St. *Paul* and *Felix*.

they *burst* with sanctity, and how ingenious they are to draw conclusions in their own favor, by the comparisons of characters which have no similitude. Upon the whole, the malady seems to lie too deep to be reached by the *theatre*: for if these people think theatres are forbidden by christianity, the use of them on this occasion, will confirm them in their opinion of their own superior holiness. I grant the thing need not be referred to any better issue, if this is effectual; but it does not appear to me, to be out of the reach of true zeal and *sound doctrine*: and if a *noble instrument* can be used in such a *cause*, is it consistent with the dignity of *religion* to use one which has any mixture of baseness? If reason and true zeal, unite their force against *no reason* and *mistaken zeal*: if *learning* is opposed to *ignorance*, and *religious toil* against *enthusiastic industry*, I apprehend we shall soon see *victory* declare on the side of truth, even among the greatest votaries of folly and *delusion*.

I told you I had read part of two little volumes, said to be written by a prelate, I mean the *Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared*. The detail therein given of the history of Enthusiasm in several countries; the quotations from the journals of the Methodists; and the high encomiums on themselves, compared with the 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14th verses of the xviii chap. of St. *Luke*, are sufficient to preserve any man from Methodism, unless his judgment is clouded with melancholy, or his spirit exalted with *enthusiastic* presumption.

Whilst

Whilst I am writing, I have a visit from a well-meaning person who is a *Methodist*, and from whom I have received the strongest testimony, and it affords some *new* matter. They say *they may be saved by faith, without good works*; but then they add, but *not without an holy life*. Here is a very nice distinction; can a life be holy, without the performance of such duties, which in the eye of reason, and in the language of scripture, are denominated *good works*? If it cannot, the *Methodists cannot be saved without good works*: but they say they *can*, under a certain state of conversion, nay, that they indubitably *shall* be saved. — And what says the Saviour of mankind with regard to this part of the conditions of salvation? “I was hungry and ye “gave me meat,” *a good work*; “thirsty and ye gave “me drink,” *another good work*; “naked and ye “clothed me,” *a further good work*. And are not these, and such like works, required of us, as objects present themselves to us, according to our capacity of relieving them? Is there a more express and authentic command in holy writ, to warn us against *evil works*, than to excite us by every kind of precept, to encourage us by every promise, to animate us by every great and noble example, to *good works*? “To promote the sincere and uniform practice of these, Christ came from heaven.” And whatever wonderful calls and illuminations may be pretended to, can *you*, or any man in his *right mind*, believe that such calls and illuminations exist, if they *frustrate* any part of

of

of *Christ's* commission; much less if they counteract the chief design and end of his coming?

Where then is the doctrine of the *Methodists*, and their great honor for the *Saviour of the world*, if so much efficacy is ascribed to *faith* in his merits, that it is imagined men may be saved by them, without a compliance with the terms which himself has declared to be necessary?—And how far will the absurdity lead us: if without *good works* we may be saved; may we not be saved, notwithstanding our *bad ones*, even if those bad ones should be unrepented of? Does not the doctrine lean to this side of the question? not to do *good works*, is in one sense to do *bad ones*: for it is not consistent with the nature of man to be *inactive*. How absurd soever it may appear, *some* of these deluded mortals have carried it this length, by saying, “*Art thou a sinner? Mighty well!—Art thou a vile and reprobate sinner? Better still! Art thou a lost and undone sinner? Best of all! It was for such as thee that Christ died.*”—Is not this a way of stating the argument, as if it were calculated to make the *unlettered* believe, that in order to *secure salvation*, it is *necessary* to be a *sinner*.—We are all logicians in a certain degree; but when we depart from *common sense*, we are apt to draw very ridiculous and wild conclusions: and I should not be surprized to hear a *Methodist* say, “*Who would not be such a one as those for whom Christ died? The preacher says, that the greater sinner I am, IT IS BEST OF ALL; therefore in order the better to secure to myself the merits of the death of Christ, it is best of all to be as great a sinner as I*

can

can be, even if I should expose myself to suffer the punishment of temporal death!"—There is nothing so monstrous which such wild doctrines do not lead to? The vilest part of *Paganism* is not worse, than the deductions which may be made from such tenets propagated amongst the illiterate: for as mankind become truly enlightened by degrees, as history abundantly proves; so the same history informs us, that by degrees they sink into brutal ignorance, superstition, and idolatry; and the blackest crimes have been committed under a notion of religious acts, and to appease an offended deity! And though we must not expect that the *cobler* will enter so deeply into the argument, yet one would imagine that the *pastor*, who lives by the foolishness of the *cobler*, should consider a little, that, under a notion of promoting morality amongst the illiterate, he may lay the foundation of anarchy and confusion both in morals and religion.

Upon the whole, I apprehend that all *Methodists* do not agree, but in general their construction of the scriptures, is involved, and contrary to all *common sense*, in so much that it will fall of itself. And whilst we have so many great and good men in our church, who, without thundering out their *anathemas in fire and smoke*, instruct and persuade with such *apostolical energy*, and force of reasoning, at the same time referring us to the *wisdom and mercy* of the great author of nature, through the meritorious sufferings and death of a crucified Redeemer; though some of them are, I apprehend, too delicate, and do not speak of hell and damnation in terms

sufficiently strong, yet they do not frighten men into false and absurd notions of *religion*. The more *amiable* it is represented, the more we shall seek it. And if men of *true abilities* to promote religion are not encouraged, it will be the fault of the *laity*.—I hope the Methodists will come to their senses, and return soberly to their parish churches, where they may worship God as *servently* as they please, after the manner of their fathers: and that the *vicar* and his *curate* will look to *their part*, that sound doctrine and substantial sense, accompanied by *servent piety*, be so taught, that these deluded people may see the absurdity of running after *new* and *strange* doctrines.

I was in doubt, whether there might not be *something* in Methodism worthy of attention, though it was evident from their books that several things in it were *hurtful*. I did not chuse to be guided by popular reports; and I happened not to have any intimacy with a single Methodist. I was therefore held in some kind of suspense as to the quantity of merit or injury contained in it. I am now satisfied in all points, and have only to add, that if we consider the love of God, and the living in fear of offending him, as the *first*, and most essential part in the life of a christian; to reduce this principle into practice, and engage others to do the same, must be the *next* article: we shall then love our neighbors, consult the good of mankind, watch for opportunities, and spare no pains to promote it. To consider the *health*, the *comforts*, the *peace* and *happiness* of others as our own, constantly relieving

lieving the *indigent*, informing the *ignorant*, calming the
 furious minded, and admonishing the *proud* profligate,
 pouring oil into the wounds of the afflicted, and cheer-
 ing those who are in the way of happiness: these are
 the offices which christianity requires, and these are the
 duties which will support the character of one who means
 to do, what he thinks he *ought to do*, as a *man*, and as a
christian. The performance of such duties will afford
 him no small portion of delight, let the difficulties he
 meets with be ever so great. If he is watchful that nei-
 ther *lust* nor *intemperance*, *pride* nor *vanity*, *anger* nor *en-*
mity, *avarice* nor *ambition*, nor any other appetite or pas-
 sion which may *pollute* or *distract* his soul, shall get the
 dominion over him: if his infirmities occasionally betray
 him, and he implores the pardon of heaven, and becomes
 the more watchful for the time to come: if he cultivates
 that *meekness*, *candor* and *humanity*, that love of *truth* and
justice, that belief of the great doctrines which lead him
 to consider CHRIST as his *Lawgiver*, his *Sovereign*, his
Judge, his *Redeemer* and only *Mediator with God*; if he
 does this, it will keep him in *constant awe*. And if he
 prays to heaven in *public* or *private*, for the assistance
 of the *holy Spirit of God*, in the way which the divine
 wisdom shall think fit to give it; if he *lives* and *dies*
 in this temper, we may pronounce him a *happy man*.
 Though such a person should not have such certain assu-
 rance of everlasting felicity, as the Methodists pretend
 to, yet he knows that the *great disposer of all things* is
 infinitely *just* and *merciful*; and he will *feel*, in the
 most

most sensible manner, that *hope* supplies the same great end; and that divine Providence has ordained it *shall* be so. Nor is it consistent with the nature and constitution of things, placed as we are, in a *probational state*, that we should be permitted to know this important secret. We must wait the GREAT TEACHER DEATH, and by our waiting give proof of our obedience and religious fear.

With regard to several distinctions, to which we now apply the name of *Methodist*, I must observe, that if the real *Methodists* are under delusions, as we suppose, and we really mean to suppress their doctrines, surely we should not give the name to any person, on account of certain practices, which a *sober-minded christian* may think essential, without having ever heard the name of *Methodist*. But so long as we ascribe acts of piety, of the most distinguished kind, to the name, we ascribe it to the principle, which in fact is doing honor to the very thing we mean to disgrace.

If, for instance, some christians should not chuse to play at cards on *Sundays*; or not to play at any time, for any object that can agitate their own passions, or do any injury to another; or not to waste much time. If they should be so tender minded as not to allow of the fashionable answer being made, of not at home, when they are, but cannot conveniently see company. If they go to divine service punctually every day, either in public or in private: If they are remarkably simple in their dress,

with

with a view to *save* for charitable purposes, or to avoid the *pride of life*: if they are uncommonly attentive to the duty of *giving alms*, with such like good dispositions. I say, if such people are denominated *Methodists*, because some Methodists may happen to do the very same things, we shall never clear the land of their strange doctrines, for by such means the real Methodists will flourish under the supposed protection of the most respectable characters: whilst the difference may be as great, as to some essential characteristics of christianity, as between a *Christian* and a *Mahomedan*. If we blend the truly *pious* and the *enthusiast* together, the *best christians* will be so far in a state of defamation: the conduct most deserving imitation will be *ridiculed*; “the virtues flowing from the purest minds be *slighted*, as if they had their source in fancy and fanaticism:” and the interest of religion will be wounded, by the very people who pretend to be its champions. Therefore I hope we shall make *just* distinctions, and not *administer* to that confusion, which always attends *fanaticism*.

I believe with you, that some Methodists do occasionally attend the public worship, as performed according to the established rites of our church; but none whom in conscience I can call *genuine christians*, attend the *Methodists*, except it be to receive conviction, concerning the false wild doctrines which they teach.

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There are doubtless some very good *ignorant* people who are *Methodists*; but some, stiled *Methodists*, are *not such*, tho' they were favorers of the *leaders* of *Methodists*, when these distinguished themselves, by preaching with uncommon energy; but when they advanced *new doctrines*, and finding themselves of consideration with the rabble, became schismatics in principle, instead of zealots for christianity, the pious persons, whom I allude to, followed these leaders no longer.

Let nominal *christians* differ, as they may, in opinion about *faith* or *works*, those are not entitled even to the *name*, who do not acknowledge the immutable obligations of both; and they also cease to *deserve* it, when they suffer any prejudices to feed their *presumption*, to obstruct their *charity* for mankind, or hurt the interest and happiness of their *country*.

FAREWELL.

CONCLUSION.

To the Rev. Mr. N.

I presume, Sir, you will be ready to conclude, from what I told you in my last, that the institution of the *Magdalene Charity* is an effort of *extraordinary piety*; and *so it is*; but *reason*, as well as *religion*, confine it to its proper object. The several gentlemen who are concerned in the direction, give the strongest proofs of their *good sense*, as well as *religious disposition*, by observing the utmost *purity and conformity*; and there seems to be a fair prospect of success.

Without making this retreat desirable to any, but *the very wretched*, if we can take off the sharp edge of that pungent misery, to which many unhappy creatures are

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exposed,

exposed, we shall certainly do a *good work*; and experience proves that we *can* nearly draw the proper line. The object seems to me to turn upon this single point: *Shall we succor the parentless young girl, who became a prey before she well knew her crime? — Shall we relieve the distressed friendless female, who, conscious of her iniquities, and exposed to penury, contempt, infamy, and disease, supplicates for mercy from God and men? — or, shall we leave them to perish, tho' we CAN preserve them; and tho' we believe they will perish if we do NOT receive them under our protection? —* This is the state of the case; and I trust that the most sensible part of our fellow-subjects will see it in this light; that they will be persuaded this charity will save many *bodies* and *souls* from perdition, and at the same time do honor to the nation, both in a civil and religious view. No candid person who sees, and understands how it operates, can dispute this fact.

You have seen what I have been about, and how much I am obliged to *poets*. If you approve of the *humble psalm* inclosed, I intend to be a little indebted to *musicians* also. Do you think it will be deemed *tabernaculous*? With regard to *yourself*, I know you will understand my meaning.

As to the insertion of my name, I agree with you, that where *subject*, *sentiment*, and *style*, equally betray, disguise looks like an *affection of importance* rather than *humility*. Besides, a conscious integrity creates a contempt of all *little observers*; and it seems to be a duty in such cases as this, to appear *openly* for the *cause* we espouse. Awed by *false modesty*, and a servile kind of *timidity*, the most rational zeal, and the most *manly* piety are often

neglected; and the use of things intrinsically good, as often laid aside as *foolish*, merely because foolish people abuse them. — We *laugh* at others, or *despise* them, at the very moment that we ourselves are ridiculous to a degree of contempt. We adapt our conduct to the *fashion of the times*, instead of accommodating our minds to the laws of reason and religion; equally short of our mark in being *languid* in our piety, as bewildered when we follow the *false fire of enthusiasm*. Let us therefore recur to this principle, that there is a mediocrity, in which the substance of virtue consists; that if *society* is not injured by them, more than our *private good* is promoted, those *errors* are the least dangerous, which incline to the pious side. Heaven grant us all to walk in the *true path* of temporal and immortal happiness! FAREWEL.

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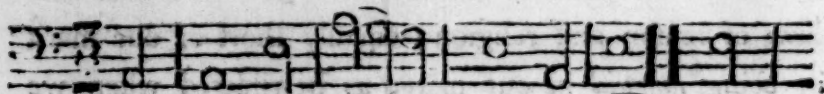
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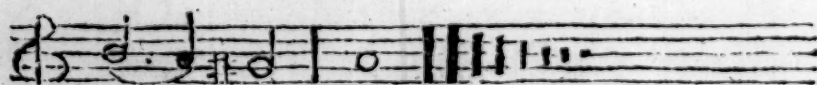
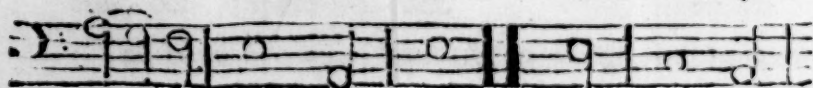
The Lord doth them support that fall, And



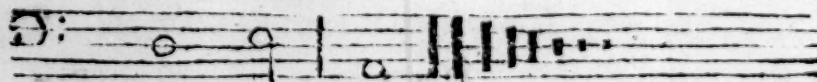
makes the pro-strate rise: For his kind



aid all creatures call, Who time-ly



food sup-plies.



2.

Whate'er their various wants require

With open hands he gives :

And he fulfils the just desire,

Of ev'ry thing that lives.

3.

He grants the full requests of those
Who him with fear adore ;
And will their troubles soon compose,
If they his aid implore.

4.

The Lord preserves all those with care,
Whom grateful love employs ;
But sinners, who his vengeance dare
With dreadful wrath destroys.

5.

My time to come, in praises spent,
Shall still advance his fame !
And all mankind with one consent,
For ever bless his name !

T H E E N D.

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